

EMA public workshop:
Best expertise vs. conflicts of interests:
Striking the right balance.
Experience from a SAG.

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Impact of revised EMA policy on handling COIs

- Overall, rather satisfactory
 - A few SAG members discontinued their participation.
 - More difficulties to invite “leading” experts.
- Experience from recent meetings where few experts were invited despite direct COI:
 - because their direct field experience with new and active drugs
 - participation to the open part of the meeting but not to the final discussion.
 - provided important insight
 - this more flexible attitude seems possible for SAGs as their mission is only consultative.
 - Safeguards: COIs mentioned explicitly at meeting’s opening, conclusions made only by core members and experts without COIs, verbatim of meeting available.

***Question 1:** ... what could the Agency do to make it more attractive for experts to participate ?*

- First, acknowledge that being an expert is a real job:
 - Reading and assessing heavy reports, often in a short notice;
 - Doing personal search and reading;
 - Giving time (travel plus meeting) over already busy agenda;
- In my experience: a job taken very seriously by SAG members and invited experts.

A balance between pros and cons

Increasing obstacles to motivation:

- Important limitations of relations with industry:
 - direct financial links: boards, advising, conferences
 - implication in clinical trials:
 - sponsoring for meetings and congresses
- Without any compensation so far and very little recognition

So far very little recognition

- from EMA: a small daily allowance + reimbursement of travel.
- from national agency: none.

Some hints

- A better recognition of implication in expertise in the professional career, specially for young professionals.
- A better financial compensation?
- Alternatively, EMA or national agencies could sponsor participation of experts to meeting or congresses, proportionally to their involvement.
 - avoiding this type of link with industry
 - enriching competence of experts working with EMA.