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Press Office

Press release

EMA tightens rules on “revolving door” for committee members and experts

Intention to take up job in pharma industry will trigger immediate halt of involvement in medicines evaluation

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has updated its rules on declarations of interests for scientific committee members and experts. The updates further strengthen EMA's policy by restricting involvement of experts in the scientific assessment of medicines if they plan to take up a job in the pharmaceutical industry. The updates also include a revised guide on how to complete the Agency's declaration of interest form.

EMA's declaration of interest policy aims for a balanced approach by effectively restricting the involvement of experts with possible conflicts of interests in the Agency's work while maintaining EMA's ability to access the best available expertise.

“The effective management of conflicts of interests is key to ensuring the independence and integrity of the Agency's scientific recommendations,” says Noël Wathion, EMA's Chief Policy Adviser. “EMA continually reviews its policy to ensure that the rules are fit for purpose.”

EMA considers that employment in a pharmaceutical company is incompatible with an involvement in Agency activities. Whenever a member of a scientific committee or working party informs the Agency that he/she intends to work for a pharmaceutical company, the Agency will immediately restrict the member from any participation in the evaluation of medicines. If necessary, the Agency will also verify whether the integrity of any ongoing or past scientific reviews in which that person was involved could have been compromised. These rules are reflected in the updated policy and in a [new guidance document](#).

EMA's policy on handling declarations of interest

In March 2014, the EMA management board endorsed a major revision of EMA's policy on handling declarations of interest for scientific committee members and experts. The revision took into account input from stakeholders at the Agency's September 2013 public workshop 'Best expertise vs conflicts of interests: striking the right balance'. It entered into force on 30 January 2015. EMA will continue to review its policy on a regular basis. The current updates build on the Agency's early experience with the revised policy.

Notes

1. This press release, together with all related documents, is available on the Agency's website.
2. [European Medicines Agency policy on the handling of declarations of interests of scientific committees' members and experts](#).
3. [European Medicines Agency breach of trust procedure on conflicts of interests for scientific committee members and experts](#).
4. [Procedural guidance on inclusion of declared interests in the European Medicines Agency's electronic declaration of interests form \(for scientific committees' members and experts\)](#).
5. [Guidance on the handling of declarations of interests in case of a scientific committee member/other \(scientific\) forum member's intention to become an employee in a pharmaceutical company](#).
6. More information on the work of the European Medicines Agency can be found on its website: www.ema.europa.eu

Contact our press officer

Monika Benstetter

Tel. +44 (0)20 3660 8427

E-mail: press@ema.europa.eu