

TGL conflict of interest policy

Independence is a critical issue for Therapeutic Guidelines Limited (TGL). Its reputation is staked on its publications and the independence of the therapeutic information that has been developed by its expert groups through interpretation of the literature and distillation of expert opinion.

Key factors for this independence are:

- TGL's independence of any form of government or commercial sponsorship including the pharmaceutical industry, and
- TGL's strict policy on conflict of interest for Directors and members of its expert groups.

The pharmaceutical industry and government both rely heavily on bodies outside their own spheres, such as universities and hospitals, for product development and regulation. In this context, given their experience and expertise, it is likely that Directors and members of expert groups have, or have had, some association with the pharmaceutical industry and/or government committees.

Members of the Company, Directors and staff of TGL

Members of the Company, Directors and staff of TGL are appointed on the basis of their expertise and interest in the core activities of TGL, especially therapeutic information and the publication of therapeutic guidelines.

It is the individual responsibility of all Members of the Company, Directors and staff of TGL to identify and disclose:

- any real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest that they or their associates¹ might have in undertaking their duties for TGL, and
- any relationships or connections that they might have with TGL and other boards, committees or organisations that may impact on TGL.

Members of the Company, Directors and staff of TGL must provide the Chairman of the Board with a written interest statement on appointment and whenever any changes occur.

In addition, if a Director believes that there is an identified, perceived or potential conflict of interest with regard to an agenda item for a Board meeting, a statement must be provided prior to the commencement of that meeting. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a conflict imperils the independence of the decision-making process, the Chairman may request that the person absents him/herself from the meeting. If, in the opinion of any Director, a conflict imperils the independence of the Chairman, that Director may request that the Chairman absents him/herself from the meeting.

¹ associates: a member of the person's family, or a business or professional colleague or partner

Expert group members

Members of the expert groups are appointed on the basis of their expertise in therapeutics and their integrity in providing independent advice. It is the responsibility of all members of expert groups to identify and disclose any real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest in the development of therapeutic guidelines.

TGL tries to minimise conflicts of interest by carefully selecting expert group members prior to inviting individuals to work with TGL. Prior to appointment, expert group members must provide the Chief Executive Officer of TGL with written interest statements, including current and planned activities pertinent to the work of TGL and the scope of the guidelines.

TGL endeavours to appoint a Chairman that does not have conflicts of interest and whenever possible expert group members with no conflicts of interest. However, in circumstances where expert groups are not able to perform their work without members who have conflicts of interest, TGL will ensure that such members represent a minority of the expert group.

Prior to each meeting, a register of declared interests will be prepared and distributed to expert group members with the agenda papers for each meeting. In the initial meeting of the group, each expert group member will be asked to explain how his/her conflict of interest could influence the guideline recommendations. The expert group and Chairman will deliberate and determine whether a conflict of interest exists and determine the member's subsequent involvement.

Following a declaration of a perceived or real conflict of interest, a member may be asked by the Chairman to absent him/herself from the meeting while the expert group deliberates and makes its determination. The member's exclusion shall be recorded in the minutes.

Alternatively, concern about conflict of interest within an expert group may be referred to the Board through a confidential communication to the Chief Executive Officer.

In subsequent meetings, if a member believes there is an identified, perceived or potential conflict of interest with regard to an agenda item, this must be declared to the expert group and the group's subsequent decision must be recorded in the minutes.

External reviewers

Prior to appointment, external reviewers must provide the Chief Executive Officer of TGL with written interest statements, including current and planned activities pertinent to the work of TGL and the scope of the guidelines. Any declared interests are managed in a similar manner to those of expert group members.

Interest statements

Interest statements must comprise a declaration of any interests that may be capable of influencing advice or decisions relating to the operation or activities of TGL, or that may affect the integrity and reputation of TGL.

Interests may be academic, professional, personal or financial (including equity interest, consultancies, or research support). Sources of research funding and membership of advisory boards of companies and other organisations, especially in the past five years, should be declared if it is relevant to any issue being considered. Associations may be with either government or with a company that stands to gain from the use of any product (or its competitor) recommended in the guidelines.

Registers of Directors', Expert group members' and External reviewers' declared interests will be published on the TGL website <www.tg.org.au>.

Declaration of interests

Name:

Employment/current
position:.....

Expertise/experience relevant to your role as a with Therapeutic Guidelines Limited:

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In the context of the expertise/experience that you have listed, please identify and declare any real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest you or your associates² might have in undertaking your duties for Therapeutic Guidelines Limited (TGL), and any relationships or connections you might have with TGL and other boards, committees or organisations that may impact on TGL. Possible conflicts of interest may be academic, professional, personal or financial and should be declared **particularly for the past five years**. Please complete the table on the following page.

Registers of Directors', Expert group members' and External reviewers' declarations of interest will be published on the TGL website <www.tg.org.au>.

² associates: a member of the person's family, or a business or professional colleague or partner

Declaration of interest Table

	Financial	Non-financial
Research grants or contracts		
Funding for education, travel or conference expenses		
Professional associations, including boards, committees, advisory groups		
Share options/holdings, patents, royalties		
Consulting, honoraria, retainers, commissions, presentations, advisory work		
Other information relevant to TGL activities, including information about an associate ³		

Signed:

Mark 'Confidential' & return to:

Date:

Chief Executive Officer, Therapeutic Guidelines Limited

Ground Floor, 473 Victoria Street, West Melbourne, Victoria 3003

³ associate: a member of the person's family, or a business or professional colleague or partner