

# Supply Chain Vendor Relations Guidelines: Clinical Equipment and Supplies

## Site Applicability

All Sites

## Practice Level

All Practice Levels

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## Vendor Representative Site and Facility Visits

PHSA Supply Chain (PHSASC) is the primary contact for all vendor representatives wishing to solicit or negotiate equipment and supplies arrangements or related services for any VCH owned and operated sites including clinics and residential care facilities.

- **Unarranged visits:** Vendor representatives cannot present randomly to a unit/department. Should a vendor representative arrive on site without a previously arranged invitation then staff are to inform vendor representative that they cannot continue the conversation and should contact PHSASC Customer Service. PHSASC will:
  - (a) Establish rationale and necessity of a vendor meeting
  - (b) Connect vendor with the right category purchasing staff
  - (c) Ensure accuracy of information
  - (d) Facilitate contact with the right VCH clinical lead
- **Arranged visits:** Vendor representatives are to be formally invited to VCH sites and facilities by leadership or a clinical leader (E.g. medical or nursing) for a specific purpose or as part of an organized project. The meeting invitation needs to be specific and include: purpose, date and time of the meeting (start/end).

The following applies to vendor representatives while on site:

- (a) On-site meetings with staff will occur on an appointment-only basis
  - (b) A vendor identification badge must be worn at all VCH sites
  - (c) Follow local site security policies
  - (d) Unless approved in advance, access is not authorized to any part of the operating room, surgical area, recovery room spaces, inpatient and outpatient units, clinic waiting rooms, and other restricted areas
  - (e) Have no contact with patients without first obtaining permission from authorized VCH clinical staff
  - (f) Do not utilize a VCH facility or site's communications systems (e.g. social media, Twitter, broadcast emails) to contact any VCH staff member
- **Confidentiality:** Staff must maintain confidentiality at all times about VCH internal initiatives. Staff are prohibited from sharing competitor information between vendors. Financial information can never be shared with a vendor without the direct involvement of PHSASC. Data that is collected through an internal VCH/PHSASC evaluation process is confidential to VCH/PHSASC.
- **Vendor access to front line staff:** As part of the implementation plan for a new product, VCH clinical leads will, if required, ensure vendor representatives are provided with reasonable access to staff for the purposes of in-servicing a new product.

### Communication of Product Information

- **Vendor Information:** For the following types of information there are formal channels of communication led by PHSASC. Vendor representatives are not to discuss any of the following at the site level without prior approval of VCH leadership or PHSASC:
  - (a) New products, recalls, product complaints, backorder substitute products
  - (b) Commercial terms, conditions, contract pricing
  - (c) Educational opportunities (e.g. in-service, on-site promotion, display of products)
  - (d) Written materials for staff, free or sample products, gifts or other incentive programs
  - (e) Information pertaining to cleaning, disinfecting, and sterilizing methodology of equipment
- **Blackout periods:** Apply during a provincial procurement initiative for a category of equipment and supplies. A blackout period is defined as from the point of issue of a request for proposal (RFP) to notification of a contract award. Only authorized VCH staff may interact with vendors during a blackout period.

### Purchase Orders and Samples

- VCH Staff are to follow PHSASC procurement policies, E-PRO ordering processes, systems, and completion of applicable forms for all ordering of equipment and supplies sourced either directly from a vendor or via the lower mainland PHSASC warehouse facility. This includes no charge, loan, repair, and return items.
- Under no circumstances will VCH staff receive unapproved product samples for direct distribution to VCH clients/patients/residents for any purpose.
- PHSASC customer service staff are available to assist with troubleshooting and unique situations.

### Product Trials/Evaluations

- Product evaluations or trial arrangements, including materials, supplies, and equipment to be loaned must be approved by VCH clinical leadership/PHSASC and the following applies:
  - (a) Submit a [New/Trial Product Request Form](#) to PHSASC Customer Service for any new product to be trialed. PHSASC will typically issue a term-based purchase order to vendor for trial/evaluation only activities.
  - (b) The development of the trial/evaluation forms and the tabulation of the evaluation data must be done by VCH/PHSASC.
  - (c) The vendor's role is generally limited to providing in-servicing, if required, prior to the start of the evaluation unless a different schedule is determined by the evaluation team.
  - (d) Data that is collected through an internal VCH/PHSASC evaluation process is confidential to VCH/PHSASC.

### Vendor Representatives and Education Support

- All offers of educational support and planning for purposes of new product implementations, trials, evaluations and loans must be organized and authorized in advance with VCH leadership or a designated VCH clinical lead. Types of educational support include:
  - (a) Site-based in-services
  - (b) In-service education scripts and supporting resources
  - (c) Information pertaining to cleaning, disinfecting, and sterilizing methodology of equipment
  - (d) Display of materials, supplies, equipment in public areas

### Vendor Sponsored Events and Conflict of Interest

- Staff are to refrain from attendance at industry-sponsored events that do not provide direct educational benefit.
- Funding of social events by vendors is prohibited and VCH Sponsorship/Solicitation policies are to be followed for all donations.
- Staff must comply with *VCH Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines*. In the event that an individual has an interest or potential interest in a vendor, that individual shall fully disclose to PHSASC any situations that may reasonably be, or may be perceived to be, construed to represent a conflict of interest.

### **Staff are to report vendors who repeatedly violate the guidelines to PHSASC or VCH Professional Practice**

- Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in loss of vendor privileges.

**NEED HELP?**  
**PHSASC Customer Service**  
**604-297-9267 [SCM\\_CS@hssbc.ca](mailto:SCM_CS@hssbc.ca)**

Related guidelines and policies

- [VCH Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines](#)
- [PHSA Supply Chain](#)
  - [Fair and Competitive Procurement](#)
  - [Vendor Relations Guidelines](#)

For further information about this document contact [Tamsin.Morgana@vch.ca](mailto:Tamsin.Morgana@vch.ca)

## **APPENDIX: Information for Vendors – Supply chain Vendor Relations Equipment and Supplies (Handout)**



VCH E+S Vendor  
Conduct - Handout

<b>Effective Date:</b>	03-JUL-2019		
<b>Posted Date:</b>	03-JUL-2019		
<b>Last Revised:</b>	03-JUL-2019		
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	03-JUL-2019		
<b>Approved By:</b> <i>(committee or position)</i>	PHC	PHSA	VCH
	n/a	n/a	Clinical Equipment and Supplies Committee Director, Professional Practice - Nursing, Acute
<b>Owners:</b> <i>(optional)</i>	PHC	PHSA	VCH
	n/a	n/a	Practice Initiatives Lead, Equipment and Supplies, Professional Practice