



MN Community Measurement Conflict of Interest Policy Work Groups and Committee Members

Policy

In order to maintain public confidence in measurement activities, MN Community Measurement (MNCM) requires the disclosure of all real or potential conflicts of interest (COI) by everyone who serves on its work groups or committees, who are charged with measure development, measure maintenance or other directed measurement and reporting activities. The disclosure shall be made at least once per calendar year or if a change in personal circumstances causes the previously submitted disclosure to no longer be accurate. Even if a person is uncertain whether a conflict of interest exists, such potential conflicts should be routinely disclosed.

Disclosure statements will be submitted prior to the participation of an interested person on any work group or committee. Potential conflicts will be shared with the members of the work group verbally as a standard agenda item and documented in the meeting minutes. Measure development and other measure related activities rely on the diverse expertise of interested persons who volunteer their services. MNCM will seek to appoint members who have no real or potential conflicts to declare. However, the participation of individuals with particular topic expertise is often desirable, and it may be the case that these individuals have a relationship with an organization that has financial or policy interest in a topic.

MNCM is committed to disclosing all potential conflicts and competing interests and taking action when necessary to assure that all measure related activities are free from any real or perceived control or influence of commercial, proprietary or political interests. Each disclosure is reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine what, if any, action is necessary.

Oversight

The MNCM Board of Directors provides the oversight of MNCM's COI policies and procedures. MNCM works in conjunction with the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI) in the review of declared conflicts of interest. ICSI/ MNCM COI Committee, which includes an MNCM Board member, reviews declared COIs and makes recommendations to the MNCM Board about the management or mitigation of declared COIs. Any appeals will be handled separately by the respective organizations. The MNCM Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility to determine what limitations or actions should be taken.

Definitions

Conflict of Interest (COI): A set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgment or actions regarding an individual's professional obligation to patients and/or society will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest such as the potential for financial gain, professional advancement, or recognition for personal achievement, causing a reasonable person to question the measurement activities of MNCM as not being free of control or influence of a commercial, proprietary or political interest.

Conflict of Interest or Potential Conflict of Interest can include:

- Material financial interest in an issue that may be discussed or considered during the course of measure activities
- Director, officer or agent that provides or could provide contracted services to MNCM
- Director, officer or agent of an organization that competes with MNCM
- Other situations that may create an *appearance of a conflict* concerning an issue that may be discussed or considered during the course of measurement activities

Dependent: Anyone for whom an exemption can be taken on the participant's federal or state tax return. (spouse, qualifying child, or qualifying relative).

Measurement Activities: Any measurement related activity that a participant engages in with MNMCM within the scope of the work group or committee, including, but not limited to measure development, measure maintenance or re-design, risk adjustment, pilot analysis, or public reporting.

Participant: Any person serving on an MNMCM work group or committee who provides professional or expert advice.

Work Group: A group of individuals assigned to work together toward an outcome. (e.g., Measure Development Work Group)

Committee: Individuals appointed or selected to perform a function on behalf of a larger group. In a sense a larger body entrusts a smaller subset of members to do something for them. (e.g., Measurement and Reporting Committee)

Actions to Manage or Mitigate Declarations

The declaration of any potential conflicts and competing interests does not necessarily imply an individual is not incapable of participating in an unbiased manner, nor does it necessarily exclude a participant from participating on MNMCM work groups or committees. Each disclosure will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

All declared potential conflicts and competing interests would be followed up with the participant to gather all relevant details in order to determine the level of possible influence present. The ICSI/MNMCM COI Review Committee will review declarations and determine which actions are appropriate to manage and mitigate the risk associated with them. Management actions that may be taken include but are not limited to the following:

- Add members to the work group or committee so that no more than one third of the work group or committee is made up of members with declared potential conflicts and competing interests.
- Remove participant from a leadership position in the group
- Remove participant as a member of the work group
- Have participant recuse him or herself from specific work group discussions

Participants serving on MNMCM work groups or committees who have a potential or real conflict of interest will abide by any requested actions to manage or mitigate the conflict of interest as set forth by the MNMCM Board. The disclosure and actions to manage or mitigate a declared conflict of interest will be discussed by the group and recorded in the meeting minutes.

Declaration Descriptions for Potential Conflicts of Interest:

1. **Speaking, Consulting Fees, and/or Honoraria:** The Participant and/or a Dependent has received speaking, consulting fees, and/or honoraria from any company that sells products or services that are relevant to the topic within the past twelve months, has an agreement to receive such fees in the future, and/or is participating in discussions that could result in such an agreement. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.

2. Patents (issued or pending), royalties or other compensation for intellectual property: The Participant and/or a Dependent has accepted license fees, royalties or has contractual rights for future royalties from any company that sells medical products, services or health information technology within the past twelve months, has such an application or contract under consideration, and/or intends to pursue a new application or contract during the next twelve months. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.
3. Employment, Contracting: The Participant and/or a Dependent is a director, officer, partner, employee, or independent contractor of any company that sells medical products, services or health information technology or represents such companies, has had such a relationship within the past twelve months, and/or is participating in discussions that could result in such a relationship. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.
4. Advisory Councils, Committees, or other Professional or Political Organizations: The Participant and/or a Dependent serves on a board, council, or committee or holds a position in a political organization that takes policy positions or advocates for changes in statutes and regulations that are relevant to the topic. The Participant will declare the names of all companies, organizations, committees or boards for which a potential conflict exists.
5. Paid expert testimony: The Participant and/or a Dependent have been paid to give expert testimony. The Participant will declare the names of all organizations for which a potential conflict exists.
6. Stock, Stock Options or Other Corporate Ownership Interest: The Participant and/or a Dependent has stock, stock options, investments, partnership, or ownership interest, other than publicly traded mutual funds, in any company that sells medical products, services or health information technology, has had such investments or ownership interest within the past twelve months, and/or is in the process of obtaining such investments or ownership interest. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.
7. Research Grants / Pending Grants / Industry or Government Support: The Participant and/or a Dependent has received in the last three years or has pending research grant support from the government, a non-profit company or foundation, or any company that sells medical products, services, or health information technology has an application for such support under consideration, and/or intends to apply for such support within the next six months. The Participant will declare the names of all sources of support for which a potential conflict exists.
8. Loans: The Participant and/or a Dependent has accepted loans from any company that sells medical products, services or health information technology within the past 12 months, has an outstanding balance from such a loan regardless of when issued, has an application for such a loan under consideration, and/or intends to seek such a loan within the next twelve months. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.
9. Outside payment for participation in this Work Group: The Participant has been paid to participate in the Work Group or Review Committee by an entity other than the MNMCM organization he/she represents. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.
10. Other Direct or Indirect Benefits: The Participant and/or a Dependent has accepted within the past 12 months lodging, travel or any good or service of sufficient value that the Internal Revenue Service requires that its value be reported on Form 1099-MISC from any company that sells medical products or services. The Participant will declare the names of all companies for which a potential conflict exists.
11. Publishing: The Participant has published (in print or on-line) one or more scientific articles, commentaries or opinion pieces relevant to the topic or has had such articles accepted for publication. The Participant will provide citations for all such articles.
12. Non-MNCM Measurement Activity: The Participant has been a member of a work group evaluating or developing measures on the same or a related topic for an organization other than MNMCM in the

last five years. The Participant will declare such participation and indicate whether he/she is willing to endorse the measurement activities that will be included in the measurement specifications produced by the Work Group, even if different from those contained in documents produced by the non-MNCM work group.

13. Other: The Participant and/or a Dependent has a financial or personal relationship or circumstance not otherwise covered above that could be perceived as a potential conflict of interest. The Participant will state the nature of the potential conflict and explain why it may be relevant.

Confidentiality

Each Interested Person shall exercise care not to disclose confidential information acquired in connection with committee activities which might be adverse to the interests of MNCM. Furthermore, Interested Persons shall not disclose or use information relating to the business of MNCM for their personal profit or advantage or the personal profit or advantage of their Family Members.

Review of policy

1. Interested Persons shall be provided with and asked to review a copy of this Policy and to acknowledge in writing that he or she has done so.
2. Annually, or for the duration of the development work group, each Interested Person shall complete a disclosure form identifying any relationships, positions or circumstances in which s/he is involved that he or she believes could be potential Conflicts of Interest.