

Adopted by the Directors June 24, 2008

## **VERMONT OXFORD NETWORK PRINCIPLES FOR ACCEPTING COMMERCIAL SUPPORT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**The mission of the Vermont Oxford Network is to improve the quality and safety of medical care for newborn infants and their families through a coordinated program of research, education and quality improvement. Through these programs we strive to promote health care that is family centered, safe, effective, efficient, timely, equitable, and socially and environmentally responsible.**

### **GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL SUPPORT**

Vermont Oxford Network's effectiveness and credibility in advancing medical knowledge through research, education, and quality improvement depends on maintaining an independent position with respect to commercial products and services. The Vermont Oxford Network has established the following guidelines, which apply to the acceptance of "Commercial Support," that is external funds from for-profit corporations selling goods or services related to health care, or who otherwise stand to gain financially from an association with the Vermont Oxford Network and access to its members.

#### **Guidelines for the Acceptance of Commercial Support and Other External Support:**

1. Vermont Oxford Network should avoid conflicts that impair or give the appearance of impairing the ability of Vermont Oxford Network, its Directors, Officers or program participants to make informed and objective decisions.
2. Directors and Officers of the Vermont Oxford Network will not engage in consulting for for-profit corporations selling goods or services related to health care or who otherwise stand to gain financially from an association with the Vermont Oxford Network and access to its members.
3. Directors and Officers of the Vermont Oxford Network will not accept fees, gifts or other payments from for-profit corporations selling goods or services related to health care, or who otherwise stand to gain financially from an association with the Vermont Oxford Network and access to its members.
4. Vermont Oxford Network may accept Commercial Support only (a) for unrestricted use or (b) for specific projects that are consistent with our mission and business strategy.
5. Vermont Oxford Network will not accept Commercial Support for the Annual Meeting or Annual Quality Congress, or for other educational meetings or educational programs.
6. The Vermont Oxford Network may accept Commercial Support for research under the following conditions:
  - a. The research is relevant to the mission of the Vermont Oxford Network and is judged to be of scientific merit. Proposals for commercially supported research based primarily on data in the Network databases will be reviewed for scientific merit by the Network Database Advisory Committee. Proposals for other commercially supported

Adopted by the Directors June 24, 2008

research will be reviewed for scientific merit by a committee appointed by the Directors that includes representation from the membership.

b. Vermont Oxford Network retains control of the selection of all personnel for the research.

c. Vermont Oxford Network retains control of the research design, and development of the protocol and analytic plan.

d. Vermont Oxford Network retains control of the conduct of the research including data collection, management, analysis, and interpretation of results.

e. Vermont Oxford Network retains control over the preparation of all manuscripts, reports, and presentations of the research methods and results. Decisions about authorship will adhere to the guidelines for authorship developed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

f. Vermont Oxford Network retains the right to publish all results or content of the research at its discretion.

g. Vermont Oxford reserves rights to the intellectual properties resulting from the project, unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.

h. If eligible for trial registration the research will be registered with the appropriate public trials registry.

7. The Vermont Oxford Network may accept Commercial Support for a special fund established to promote the improvement of medical care in low resource countries and to support the honoraria and other expenses related to the fellows in Global Health selected by the Vermont Oxford Network. Entities that provide Commercial Support for this fund may be recognized for their support of the fund in general, but will not be recognized as supporters of any individuals or projects financed in whole or part using the fund.

8. Vermont Oxford Network will disclose all sponsored activities that are partially or completely financed by external funds. Acknowledgment of external funders may be made in the Vermont Oxford Network's publications, and reports of project results, as appropriate. Vermont Oxford Network may recognize commercial support through appropriate wording or use of logos in the areas outlined below:

- Program materials
- Newsletter
- Websites
- Marketing materials publicizing the activity or program
- Press releases

9. Vermont Oxford Network permits acknowledgement of support to the Vermont Oxford Network in company communications, but requires that any use of the Vermont Oxford Network name and/or logo be approved by the Vermont Oxford Network.

10. Vermont Oxford Network may enter into contracts with commercial companies, government agencies, and other external funders that are consistent with the mission of the Network. If these contracts include reports or analyses of Network databases or registries, the confidentiality of patients, providers, and institutions will be strictly protected.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the Directors and by the Network Advisory Board.