

## Disclosure

In planning this workshop, the Steering Committee (SC) critically examined some of the issues involved in defining conflict-of-interest (COI). Often, COI rules emphasize disclosure of an individual's association with commercial entities and remuneration or other financial interests in a company. However, the SC recognizes other financial conflicts of interest may arise in conjunction with shifts in recommendations for standard practice. On an individual level, a clinician's practice and income may be affected by changes to the recommended frequency of patient visits, for example. At another level, an entire professional specialty might be adversely impacted, or advantaged, by such changes. The SC recognizes that all such financial interests – whether an affiliation with a company, the success of one's clinical practice, the prominence of a professional specialty – represent potential conflicts.

Therefore, for this workshop, all participating individuals will be required to disclose all real or potential conflicts of interest including but not limited to: association with relevant commercial interests, involvement with professional societies in an executive or policymaking role, and the nature of their primary employment. Commercial interests are defined as any proprietary entity producing health care goods or services consumed by or used on patients. These may include pharmaceutical companies, device manufacturers or distributors, service companies or other for-profit entities.

We recognize that under this broader definition of COI, virtually everyone has potential conflicts. In forming committees and working groups, the SC will seek expertise and balance in the composition of group members so that a broad a range of interests are represented.

## Levels of Review to Manage Conflicts of Interest

The development of recommendations will involve five levels of review to ensure against bias:

(1) Working Groups (WGs) will review current recommendations and develop draft recommendations for specific aspects of cervical screening based on review of the evidence. In forming the WGs, the SC sought varied expertise and balance in the composition of the members so that a diversity of perspectives and opinions are included. Clinicians, laboratorians, academics and individuals in public health are represented. WG co-chairs are free of financial ties to companies that market screening tests. All members of WGs have agreed to base their efforts on the best available evidence.

(2) An independent Evidence Evaluation Committee comprised of experts in literature reviews, evidence evaluation, and data analysis will provide feedback and guidance to the WGs as they undertake these efforts.

(3) The SC will review initial WG drafts to identify possible bias and/or gaps, provide feedback and confirm that the documents reflect a balanced, evidence-based process. SC members are free of financial ties to companies that market screening tests.

(4) At the Meeting, experts and society representatives from the multiple disciplines involved in cervical cancer screening will review the WG drafts in an open discussion forum.

(5) The Chair of the Meeting, who will be independent of the pre-meeting process, will monitor the meeting discussion for bias and intervene as appropriate to maintain focus on an evidence-based guidelines process.