

RICHMOND PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER MAY 2010



*Richmond Pharmacists Association
A local association of the Virginia Pharmacists Association*

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PHRMA'S NEW CODE OF ETHICS MAY HINDER ORGANIZATION FUNDING

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The old saying, "there is no free lunch" hit home in January 2009 for many organizations, including us at RPhA, due to a new code of ethics being implemented by The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). This new code, actually an updated version of one already in place, is titled, "Code on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals." The purpose is to focus the drug industries' efforts on improving patient care. With this new focus, the drug companies mandated cutting out various programs like the production and distribution of non-educational and practice-related items such as pens, note pads, and mugs with company logos. You might have thought this was a policy change from the company you work for but it was the change in guidelines mentioned above.

The major concerns with the new code however, are the tighter restrictions on funding organization dinner meetings. This is of particular concern for organizations,

like RPhA, because drug companies have historically committed funds to help sponsor our monthly dinner meetings. However, as of last January the funding for these dinners became harder to come by. This is due to the new code, which has placed strict regulations on funding organizational dinners by drug companies.

The new code does not however, cut out funding of dinner meetings entirely. It states that, “a (drug) company may engage a healthcare professional to provide medical or scientific information to a group of healthcare professionals on behalf of the (drug) company.” It also states that these programs may include, “modest meals... as long as they occur in a venue and manner conducive to informational communication.” In addition, a company sales person could attend the program “for the purposes of assisting the speaker with logistics and helping to assure that the content of the presentation complies with FDA requirements.”

With the new requirements from the updated code on funding dinner meetings, our organization needs to investigate where to go from here. One option is to continue holding our monthly meetings at fine dining establishments with no CE available. A second option would be to charge a fee to the members to cover some or all of the dinner and/or continuing education expenses and have the meeting at a less expensive restaurant or meeting room with an inexpensive catered meal. We are also requesting unrestricted educational grants from pharmaceutical companies to help with funding when possible and appropriate.

I wanted to remind the members of these important changes in the PhRMA code and welcome your comments and suggestions as we continue to provide informative quality programs in the months to come.

More information on the PhRMA website, url:

http://www.phrma.org/code_on_interactions_with_healthcare_professionals/

Please contact me or any of the board members with any new suggestions or comments you may have. Visit our Facebook page and leave comments if you like. Don't forget to complete the survey.

Thanks
Rusty

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[RICHMOND PHARMACIST ASSOCIATION SURVEY LINK](#)
[* PLEASE COMPLETE SURVEY -](#)**

Please take a few minutes to click on the Survey Link (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2BQDLBD>). Your honest and complete feedback is essential and the information you provide will assist the Richmond Pharmacists Association (RPhA) in continuing to develop quality programs that meet your needs.

The survey is anonymous.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

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