

International Headache Society

Ethics Committee Report *25 September 2020*

Morris Levin (chair), Anne MacGregor, Mario Peres,
Norihiro Suzuki, Cristina Tassorelli, Gisela Terwindt

Topics

- Ethics Committee Aims
- IHS policy for managing COI
- Ethics committee sponsored course at IHC Berlin
- Next meeting – IHC meeting Berlin

Why should medical organizations adhere to high ethical values?

- Avoids lawsuits
- Builds public trust (we need that to fulfill IHS education goals)
- Builds public and political credibility (for advocacy goals)
- Feels right; makes us want to belong to and work for the society

IHS Ethics Committee Aims (mission)

Identify, interpret, and manage current challenging ethical issues pertaining to headache medicine at three levels:

1: Headache Sufferers

- To promote the welfare of headache sufferers by publishing advice, guidance and recommendations on ethical issues relevant to research, practice and treatment of headache disorders

2: Headache Treatment and Research Organizations

- To draft statements which will bring the relevant ethical concerns in the field of headache medicine to the attention of governments, the medical and allied professions, the pharmaceutical and insurance industries, lay and charitable organizations and any other relevant parties

IHS Ethics Committee Aims (mission)

Identify, interpret, and manage current challenging ethical issues pertaining to headache medicine at three levels:

3. IHS Membership and Organization Activities

- To address ethical concerns of International Headache Society members regarding IHS activities
- To initiate reviews of IHS activities that raise ethical concerns that are referred to or identified by IHS Ethics Committee

Conflict of Interest Policy has been approved and posted on website

Principles:

- COI is essentially unavoidable. It can be minimized and it can be managed to avoid unprofessional behavior (biased presentations, promotion of commercial products, withholding of information, dishonesty)
- Best approaches include prohibiting industry from controlling content of educational sessions and data presentations, and clear and specific disclosure of COI by each speaker and meeting planner.
- A responsible and productive alliance with pharmaceutical and other medical technology companies is both possible and sometimes desirable in pursuit of our organization's goals. However there are a number of areas in which conflicts of interest, or the perception of such conflicts may arise. These areas generally involve the potential for bias in our policies, educational programs, and research. In order to minimize potential conflict of interest we endorse the following guidelines:

IHS Conflict of Interest Policy



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Cephalalgia

English

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Articles and Policies

Articles

IHS is governed by its Articles of Association

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Policies

IHS develops management policies according to UK company law and UK Charity Commission guidelines

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IHS Conflict of Interest Policy

1. IHS shall maintain complete control over its policies. To this end, no representatives of pharmaceutical or medical device companies will participate in formulating or revising these policies.
2. IHS shall maintain complete control over the planning, content, and delivery of its educational programs. To this end, no representatives of pharmaceutical or medical device companies will be involved in planning or directing its public educational and scientific meetings.
3. IHS shall maintain complete control over planning, execution, and publication of IHS investigator-initiated research. IHS will decide when and where to submit results of these studies for publication.
4. IHS shall maintain complete control over the content of its website, newsletter, and any other publications. No IHS media will include any industry-sponsored promotional or marketing material or advertisements. Authors and creators of all IHS publications will disclose all ties with industry, including roles as consultants, investigators, sponsored speakers, shareholders, or employees, ideally specifying how disclosed ties might influence content. This information will be clearly stated in program syllabi.

IHS Conflict of Interest Policy

5. IHS and members of its Board of Directors will strive to provide a balanced impartial view of data pertaining to commercial products. IHS will not endorse specific products.

6. IHS will accept grants for support of its programs, over which it has complete control, and which do not pose any significant conflict of interest.

7. IHS and members of its Board of Directors will not accept gifts from pharmaceutical or device companies, other than educational or clinically useful items of modest value, or modest meals at conferences.

8. Members of the IHS Board of Directors may receive reasonable compensation from pharmaceutical or other companies for services provided (e.g. bona fide consultation with pharmaceutical and medical technology companies, lecture engagements supported by industry sponsors, or participation as investigators in industry-sponsored research studies). These relationships will be made clear on the IHS public website.

IHS Conflict of Interest Policy

9. Members of the IHS Board of Directors shall not use their position for private gain. They shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

10. Speakers at IHS educational conferences will disclose all ties with industry, including roles as consultants, investigators, sponsored speakers, shareholders, or employees, ideally specifying how disclosed ties might influence content of their presentations. This information will be clearly stated in program brochure, and updated by the speaker at the time of her/his presentation.

11. Promotional and marketing activities by pharmaceutical companies at IHS conferences will be clearly identified and delineated from educational and scientific presentations.

12. IHS will discourage the distribution of non-educational, non-clinically useful or excessive gifts to attendees at its conferences.

13. IHS shall maintain complete control over grants and scholarships it awards and will choose recipients in an unbiased fashion. To this end, no representatives of pharmaceutical or medical device companies will be involved at any level in awarding these grants.

Some specifics

- For IHS board members, meeting planners, and IHC lecturers speaking at industry events, The EthCom recommend a maximum of one industry presentation at IHC. For this to be meaningful however, speakers at IHC sessions MUST disclose these industry talks properly, not just a disclosure listing. A disclosure slide has been recommended. There will be consequences for any violations.
- The EthCom has recommended and supports the decision of the planning committee that a speaker at the IHC should only speak once, in order to give as many talented members opportunity to lecture there.

IHC Berlin Course on Ethics

Ethical Issues in Headache Medicine

- Professional Ethics for Headache Medicine Practitioners (20')
- Research and Publication Ethics in Headache Medicine (20')
- Global Ethical Issues in Headache Medicine (20')
- Q&A (20')

Future plans

- The Ethics committee is planning to write a position statement concerning research and publication ethics to be submitted to Cephalalgia. This will address in a balanced way authorship issues, research conflicts of interest and several other important issues.
- We will also plan to compose 2 other articles for publication and placement on our website – Professional Ethics for Clinicians in Headache Medicine, and Ethical Concerns of the IHS regarding its organization and actions.