

## **Australian and New Zealand Vasculitis Society: Relationship with Industry Policy**

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### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Australian and New Zealand Vasculitis Society (ANZVASC) is a Limited Liability Company registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC; ABN 99630318768), with Deductible Gift Recipient Status (DGR) Status with the Australian Taxation Office. ANZVASC is a collaborative society of clinicians, scientists and consumers interested in research, best practice clinical care and education in vasculitis.

1.2. This document should be read and considered with the ANZVASC Conflict of Interest Policy, submitted to the ACNC in 2019. The Board and the Chair are to ensure that any relationship with industry is managed according to the COI policy and the ANZVASC Constitution.

1.3 This policy comes into effect prospectively from the date of adoption, 1 November 2022

### **2. Purpose**

2.1 ANZVASC recognises that it is important that its members and industry may work collaboratively to improve the quality of, and access to, health care through the development of and access to new and improved therapeutic products, treatments and services. For the purposes of these guidelines, industry refers to commercial entities directly associated with health care such as those involved in the development, manufacture and supply of health care products and those involved in the provision of health care services. This includes (but is not limited to) the pharmaceutical industry, medical device and

technology industry, other health care product suppliers, health care facilities, medical services such as pathology, radiology and assisted reproductive technologies and other health services such as pharmacy and physiotherapy (herein 'industry').

2.2 While the relationship between ANZVASC and industry can potentially benefit patients and the wider community, it is essential that such relationships are managed appropriately by ANZVASC to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest which can undermine public confidence and trust.

2.3 According to AMA Guidelines "Doctors' Relationship with Industry 2018" Doctors' relationships with industry should:

- reflect core professional values such as transparency, accountability, trust and fairness;
- not compromise, or be perceived to compromise, doctors' professional judgment and professional integrity;
- be open and transparent, able to withstand public and professional scrutiny, meet public and professional standards and expectations and adhere to relevant legislative and regulatory requirements;
- promote effective stewardship and responsible use of health care resources.

ANZVASC acknowledges the importance of and adheres to these general principles in the context of clinicians and researchers who are members of ANZVASC.

2.4 The purpose of this Relationship with Industry Policy is to describe how ANZVASC identifies, discloses and resolves actual and perceived conflicts of interest in our relationship with industry.

### **3. Potential Types of relationships with industry**

3.1 Relationships between clinicians/researchers and industry can take many forms. For example, a doctor, other clinician or research scientist may:

- be involved in industry-sponsored research involving human participants, including participation in post-marketing surveillance studies;
- enter into contractual arrangements with industry;
- attend meetings sponsored or supported by industry, including scientific, educational and continuing professional development meetings;
- provide services to industry as a consultant, director and speaker;
- act as an advisory board member;
- own industry shares or similar options;
- hold intellectual property rights in a medical device or similar product;
- receive product samples, dispense products or meet with industry representatives.

3.2 However, the ANZVASC constitution excludes from the categories of Ordinary or Associate Membership "any person who is engaged in any substantial commercial activities involving the sale or marketing of vasculitis related products (except as an incidental or minor adjunct to their clinical practice, teaching or research activities)"



#### **4. Industry Members of ANZVASC**

ANZVASC's Constitution includes, in addition to Ordinary and Associate Members, a category for Industry Members, as individuals who

- (a) are engaged in any commercial activities involving the sale or marketing of vasculitis related products; and
- (b) satisfy any other criteria set out in the Regulations; and
- (c) are ordinarily resident in Australia or New Zealand.

Industry Members have no rights in their capacity as Industry Members to vote or speak at meetings of Members or to become Directors, but may receive notices and publications and attend any general meeting of the Company.

#### **5. ANZVASC Office Bearers and Board**

5.1 As the public face of ANZVASC, the Chair, Office-bearers and wider Board of ANZVASC have an additional level of responsibility to ensure ANZVASC status, educational events, website, social media accounts and publications are not used to promote the interests of industry over patients' interests or to promote products or procedures that are not evidence-based

5.2 The Chair of ANZVASC should not participate in a scientific industry advisory board related to a vasculitis or potential vasculitis therapy. However the Chair can speak at an industry symposia with prior approval from the ANZVASC Board.

5.3 The Chair of ANZVASC and all ANZVASC Board members and other office holders should be particularly mindful of the existence and nature of any relationship with industry that they may have. This includes but is not limited to the requirement to disclose such relationships at board meetings and the importance of disclosing conflicts of interest in other relevant circumstances, under the ANZVASC Board Conflict of Interest policy.

#### **6. Scientific, Educations and Clinical Independence of ANZVASC from Industry**

6.1 ANZVASC does not endorse or promote products or services

6.2 ANZVASC is not influenced by industry in the content of its educational programs and website

6.3 Providers of unrestricted educational grants have no input into ANZVASC resources or educational content

6.4 Links to external websites from the ANZVASC website do not imply that their products or services are endorsed by ANZVASC

#### **7. ANZVASC has Deductible Gift Recipient Status (DGR) Status with the Australian Taxation Office. It welcomes donations and sponsorships within the following guidelines**

7.1 Donations or sponsorships that provide risk to the reputation of the society and its members will not be accepted

7.2 Where possible, sponsorships and donations should have agreed documentation that specify purpose, outcomes, timing, reporting (for example to ANZVASC members at the AGM), use in marketing (if any, by ANZASC and by Industry)

7.3 Sponsorships are generally considered to be for specific purposes that fall within the ANZSN objectives, including but not limited to facilitating research in Australia and New Zealand into vasculitis and assisting in organising meetings, seminars and lectures in the field of vasculitis.

7.4 Unless otherwise agreed in writing sponsorships are non-exclusive.

7.5 Donations and sponsorships larger than \$2,000 should be reviewed by the Board

## **8. Sponsorship of Professional Educational Meetings and Training**

8.1 Although ANZVASC meetings will be organised independently from industry, from time to time, industry may provide financial and/or material support. Industry support of ANZVASC meetings and activities will be open to public scrutiny.

8.2 Meetings and activities will be developed for the purposes of professional education and training, not for the benefit of industry.

8.3 ANZVASC recognises that there is a risk that participants attending an industry-supported meeting may be influenced by (or perceived by others to be influenced by) industry, thus compromising their professional independence. Support will be managed carefully so as not to compromise the participants' objectivity and capacity to recommend treatments based on patients' best interests nor undermine the reputation of the medical profession.

8.4 It is acceptable for industry to support ANZVASC meetings that contribute to clinicians' and researchers' education and continuing professional development (CPD); however, such support should be untied, fully disclosed, at arms-length to the organisation of the meeting and consistent with the following guidance:

- Support by industry should be provided independently of the meeting's clinical and scientific content;
- Whilst industry may sponsor speakers, the ANZVASC board or an independent organising committee ANZVASC members should make independent decisions, unconstrained by sponsorship regarding the:
  - organisation;
  - content;
  - selection of speakers and attendees;
  - choice of education activities and materials;
  - control of sponsorship funds (including the use of funds to defray other costs).
- Meeting organisers and participants must not be in a position of conflict of interest by virtue of any affiliation with the supporter(s) of those activities. Speakers and presenters must declare any relevant interests, including direct or indirect support to attend a particular meeting.
- The program for such activities must declare the support and/or other aid received;



- Support for students, doctors-in-training, researchers-in-training and post-graduate/post-doctoral fellows to attend educational events may be appropriate; however, ANZVASC must be responsible for selecting the attendees as well as controlling the sponsorship funds.

8.5 Support for participants who provide a service to a meeting should be indirect, untied and fully disclosed. The following is important:

- Any payments or reimbursements to individual participants should be commensurate with any services provided and made through the meeting organisers/ANZVASC and not the supporters;
- It is not appropriate for support to cover the costs of family or friends who may accompany a participant;
- Individuals should not accept any form of support that obliges them to promote a particular product or company;
- It is up to the individual to ensure their presentation is objective, scientifically sound and not biased.

8.6 People whose research is presented at an ANZVASC meeting that is financially supported by industry or who are paid by industry should declare this in any paper, presentation or contribution (e.g., at the beginning of a presentation or on a poster or paper).

8.7 While an ANZVASC meeting's general sessions will be organised independently, it may be acceptable for a sponsoring company to organise its own breakout session with approval of the board. Where this occurs, it will be made clear that the breakout session is sponsored by a particular company and will adhere the general principals of this policy.

8.8 At some meetings, it may be appropriate for industry trade displays to be on exhibit. Each trade display should clearly bear the name of the sponsoring company and should not use gifts or other offers beyond a nominal value to entice attendees to visit the display.

## **9. Industry sponsored research involving human participants and post-marketing surveillance studies**

From time to time ANZVASC may be approached to promote or take part in medical research involving human participants. ANZVASC will only take part in industry sponsored research only if it has genuine merit, is ethically approved, socially responsible and scientifically valid.

## **10. Endorsement and Co-endorsement with Industry**

ANZVASC will not co-brand or endorse information sheets, statements or activities with industry such as pharmaceutical, complementary medicine or device industries, or other commercial entities.

## **11. Use of professional status to promote the interests of industry**

Professional societies such as ANZVASC are regarded by industry as having particular influence within the professional and wider community and may approach ANZVASC to



make public comments supporting certain therapeutic products or procedures. As such, ANZVASC and its members, including but not limited to Board Members. The Chair has an extra level of responsibility to ensure its professional status is not used to promote the interests of industry over patients' interests or to promote products or procedures that are not evidence-based.

## **12. Making a complaint**

12.1 If you wish to make a complaint about the way ANZVASC interacts with industry, please put your complaint in writing to the Chair, ANZVASC (email: [anzvasc@gmail.com](mailto:anzvasc@gmail.com)).

12.2 Receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged within a reasonable time. This will usually be within 7 days.

12.3 Complaints in writing about how we have handled our relationship with industry will be investigated and we will provide you with a response within a reasonable time. This will usually be within 30 days.

## **13. Amendments to the ANZVASC Relationship with Industry Policy**

ANZVASC reserves the right to modify this Relationship with Industry Policy at any time by posting changes on its website.

## **14. Contacting ANZVASC**

Questions about the ANZVASC Relationship with Industry Policy or its handling should be directed to the Chair, ANZVASC by email: [anzvasc@gmail.com](mailto:anzvasc@gmail.com)