

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

The mandatory declaration of conflict of interest in medicine is widespread in scientific conferences and meetings of all kinds throughout the world. If a doctor lectures at a conference or workshop, or simply wants to display a poster with the findings of his or her studies, they must present a declaration of conflict of interest for the last 5 years of professional practice.

The same applies if they want to publish an article in one of the more prestigious medical journals (not all publications have this requirement); **one must make public every last cent received from the pharmaceutical industry.**

This is because it is NOT uncommon for doctors, who work as consultants and researchers or are publishing for the pharmaceutical industry, to occupy prestigious roles as educators or researchers, or to be part of expert panels. A priori, there is nothing wrong with doctors giving lectures, presenting findings, publishing, giving expert opinions and recommending treatment protocols. However, **international consensus has been reached that the professional public deserves to know what interests may have influenced or guided a lecturer** (beyond what would be considered purely scientific or clinical), especially if the expert seeks to change the professional practice of the doctors in the audience.

However, this practice has not spread to those who are truly affected by the ethical implications of physicians' relationships with the pharmaceutical industry: our patients. **What right do we have to assume that they are not interested?**

In Sinews we believe that patients may be interested in knowing

whether the pharmaceutical company that makes the medication that their doctor just prescribed, has paid for the doctor's stay in a five star hotel, along with the conference registration fee, or if they have received financial incentives for being included in a study of some kind. We believe that it would be AS important to them as knowing what the doctor's credentials are or knowing what is on their résumé. So we decided to make public our declaration of conflict of interest:

Dr. Orlanda Varela responds with a commitment to truthfully answer the following questions regarding the existence of a potential conflict of interest in her clinical practice as well as her teaching and research activities:

Have you accepted, in the last 5 years, from any organization linked to the pharmaceutical industry, that could somehow stand to lose or gain financially from the results of their studies or the findings of its publications, presentations, etc.:

- Compensation for attending a symposium or conference? **No**
- Fees for a class? **No**
- Fees for arranging courses? **No**
- Funds for research? **No**
- Funds for a member of your team? **No**
- Fees for consultations? **No**

Have you, in the past five years, been **employed by an organization linked to the pharmaceutical industry** that could, in some way, lose or gain financially, depending on the results of its studies or the conclusions included in its publications, lectures ... or its clinical intervention protocols?

No

Do you own stock in any organization linked to the pharmaceutical industry that could, in some way, lose or gain financially, depending on the results of its research activities, publications, lectures ... or clinical intervention protocols? **No**

Do you have **any other type of financial interest** that may influence your clinical judgment, research or training activities so as to interfere with the best interest of users / groups to whom such activities are aimed? **No**