

July 24, 2008

TO: JHMed@jhmi.edu

FROM: Ed Miller

SUBJECT: Important Message from Dean Miller About Speaker Bureaus

Dear Colleague,

In a recent letter

(<http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/Research/OPC/articles/MillerMessageonUnreportedCOIs.pdf>), I highlighted the importance of ensuring responsible interaction between academia and industry and emphasized that transparency is an important part of maintaining the public trust. In many cases, however, transparency is insufficient.

When physicians engage in activity that appears to promote drugs or other medical products, we risk eroding trust in our medical professionalism. Participating in company speakers bureaus, whose purpose is to market drugs or devices and where a physician cannot fully control the content of her presentation, undermines the trust of patients, colleagues, students and trainees.

To address this issue, in June 2008 the Advisory Board of the Medical Faculty approved a policy (<http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/faculty/policies/index.html>) that prohibits faculty from participating in speakers bureaus or delivering talks for which they do not have full control and authority over the content of their presentation. The policy is effective immediately. The Office of Policy Coordination will no longer approve disclosures involving this type of activity. Faculty who currently participate in speakers bureaus or similar activities must terminate these activities by Dec. 31, 2008.

This policy underscores the commitment of Johns Hopkins physicians to the highest standards of professionalism. I appreciate your cooperation.

Edward D. Miller, M.D.
Dean of the Medical Faculty/CEO
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