Continuing Medical Education Conflict of Interest Policy

Background
As an accredited provider of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI) adheres to the ACCME’s Standards for Commercial Support. “These standards describe practices that the ACCME considers appropriate for SNMMI to ensure that its CME activities are independent, free of commercial bias and beyond the control of persons or organizations with economic interest in influencing the content of CME.” (ACCME Preamble to 2004 Updated Standards for Commercial Support)

Scope of the Policy
This disclosure policy is designed to permit formal declarations for CME activities of relevant financial relationships in any amount occurring within the past 12 months that create a conflict of interest. The policy applies to all involved in a position to control the content of an education activity – speakers, authors, planning committee members, organizers, moderators and staff.

Disclosure Required
SNMMI requires that speakers, authors, planning committee members, organizers, moderators and staff complete disclosure forms identifying relevant financial relationships for CME activities at the beginning of the planning phase. SNMMI must disqualify any individual who refuses to disclose relevant financial relationships from being a planning committee member, teacher or an author of CME. Such individuals also cannot have control of or responsibility for the development, management, presentation or evaluation of the CME activity. SNMMI will disclose to participants any relevant financial relationships prior to the CME activity.

Disclosure of Financial Interests
A financial conflict of interest is deemed to exist when speakers, authors, planning committee members, organizers, moderators and staff and/or a member of his or her immediate family, has a direct or indirect financial interest with a commercial organization that has the potential for increasing the value of the financial relationship with the commercial organization and influence the content of CME. Such direct or indirect financial interest includes:

1) consulting agreements
2) employment contracts
3) clinical trial agreements
4) royalties
5) grants
6) the receipt of honoraria or gifts from such organizations
7) any signed agreements that will generate guaranteed deferred compensation
In addition to the above disclosure of financial interests, any stock holdings should be disclosed. Disclosure is similarly requested for all stock options and royalty rights, regardless of their apparent value.

Implementation and Application of Disclosure Policy
The Continuing Education Committee will appoint a conflict of interest sub-committee to review all disclosure forms prior to delivering the education activity to learners. This committee will determine if any of those involved in planning or presenting content have a potential for a relevant conflict of interest.

Resolution of Conflicts of Interest
In the event the conflict of interest sub-committee finds a potential for a relevant conflict of interest, one or more of the following actions will be initiated in order for the educational activity to take place. The actions taken depend on the way in which the content for the activity will be developed. The actions will be appropriate to the SNMMI and will meet the goal of managing conflict in a way that is in the best interest of the public.

Required actions:
- Validate content via peer review
- Ensure content references the best available evidence
- Participate in the National Faculty Initiative at www.NFEInitiative.org
- Change the nature of the financial relationship
- Alter an individual planner’s or presenter’s control over content
- Incorporate an evidence-based approach to CME presentation
- Change the focus of the CME activity

Approved by the Continuing Education Committee: January 29, 2005
Approved by the SNMMI Board of Directors: January 29, 2005