



Dutch professional
perspective on disclosure
measures

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Development of self regulation of drug advertising, sponsorship and hospitality

- Started in 1999, when Inspection of Health Care unveiled many unethical interactions between industry and health care professionals (paid holiday trips, expensive gifts etc.)
- Pharmaceutical umbrella organisation and national organisations of doctors, pharmacists and drugstores established the *Foundation for the regulation of drug advertising (CGR)*
- Objectives: to develop a Code of practice, to supervise the application of the Code, and to collaborate with the Inspection of Health Care

Self regulation

Code regulates:

- “hospitality” at events en conferences, including travel and hotel expenses
- gifts and payment for services
- sponsoring of professionals and care institutions
- financial support of patient organisations
- advertising at conferences aimed at (non)prescribing professionals and other members of the public
- advertising in general media
- *disclosure of financial relations between industry and professionals*

Self regulation

Why did we choose this way of organizing regulation?

3 closely related reasons:

- Only shared responsibility of all parties can create broad support for measures
- Government was reluctant to establish legal regulation, as this is certain to elicit resistance in the field
- Gradual persuasion of parties concerned works better than forbidding regulation, although it takes time

Self regulation: what do doctors know and think of it?

Survey of 2014 proves that 80 – 90 % of doctors know the Code rules about

- Sponsoring of conferences and postgraduate education
- Payments allowed for attending conferences
- Value of gifts allowed
- Payment by industry of services
- Rules for attending conferences abroad

This is a steady finding since 2009. Doctors know about the rules, sympathize with them and generally comply well

Disclosure code

Scope of the code

- Restricted to relations of certain intensity and economic value: service agreements, sponsoring, contribution to hospitality, all above € 500 a year per event or action
- Educational materials are excluded
- Clinical trials are excluded because they are disclosed in the national trial register
- Devices will be gradually included
- In tune with the EFPIA code

All transactions published annually in the Transparency Register

Transparency register (TR): perspective and development

- Not much resistance among professionals at launch of Register, after extensive information campaigns
- Evaluation end 2014: 80% of doctors are positive, 20% negative (“patronizing, outrageous”)
- 17% of doctors registered in TR does not know about the TR
- Continuous information aimed at doctors and other target groups is necessary to learn the TR’s objectives and to accept it
- Devices (orthopaedic, cardiac) will be included with full cooperation of the scientific colleges of medical specialists