

GUIDELINES TO WORKING WITH THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

Background

The relationship between patient organisations and the pharmaceutical industry has come under increasing scrutiny in recent times. Both the media and leading politicians have questioned the ability of organisations to maintain their impartiality and independence in the face of receiving (sometimes significant) funding from industry.

The Stroke Association understands the importance of working in partnership with all stakeholders who have an interest in stroke, including the pharmaceutical industry, to achieve common goals. The Stroke Association recognises that working with pharmaceutical companies that manufacture and market drugs and treatments gives the organisation important background knowledge and provides positive networking opportunities. The Stroke Association also acknowledges that collaborative working and financial support from pharmaceutical companies is vital for the growth of the organisation. However, The Stroke Association also recognises the need for such partnerships to be transparent and able to stand up to scrutiny.

As a result, The Stroke Association has developed this document to define how the organisation engages with the pharmaceutical industry. This will ensure that The Stroke Association can withstand external scrutiny of its decisions and actions whilst at the same time allowing the organisation the freedom to work in a way which ultimately benefits stroke survivors.

About the guidelines

This document defines how The Stroke Association works with pharmaceutical companies and other commercial organisations related to the industry. This is important to ensure that The Stroke Association:

- demonstrates its independence and impartiality
- is transparent, consistent and fair when working with industry
- maintains its integrity and reputation within the charity as well as within the external cardiovascular community and wider health sectors
- remains true to its patient-centred approach, putting stroke survivors at the heart of everything it does to ensure best possible outcomes
- shows its commitment to working collaboratively with pharmaceutical companies, alongside other stakeholders involved in stroke, to improve patient outcomes
- remains accountable to its internal and external stakeholders

All pharmaceutical companies that The Stroke Association works in partnership with will receive a copy of this document and must agree to work within its principles. The guidelines also complies with other relevant best practice guidelines and codes that have been put in place to ensure a clear, transparent and honest working relationship between pharmaceutical companies and the charitable sector, such as those produced by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the Association of the British Pharmaceutical