

*CHANGES IN ETHICAL CONDUCT: TRENDS IN THE USA

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Abstract

There has been considerable activity in the past year as a result of the Justice Department Investigation into the medical device industry. There has been an over reaction by many which may negatively impact future research, development and reporting of clinical outcomes. This paper will review some of these activities. A review of professional standards and guidelines has been conducted looking at health care compliance issues as they related to commercial relationships, professional medical societies, individual surgeons, and health care workers with specific focus on disclosure.

Within any important issue, there are always aspects no one wishes to discuss: conflict of interest. Perception of a conflict of interest is often enough to bring about a review of activity.

Overreaction has occurred as a result of government intervention into the medical device industry. Continuing medical education, professional societies by-laws, clinical/surgical publications, medical/legal exposure, product research, development and industry marketing activities have all been impacted.

When professionals fail to provide a proper review process on standards and guidelines on ethical behavior they set themselves up for government oversight and restrictions on their behavior. Be informed and disclose. Know what, when and how to disclose. Protect yourself, no one else will.

This Article

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