



Conflict of Interest Policy

Original: June 7, 1997

Revised: March 2010

Purpose: The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to promote open, unbiased decisions which are in the best interest of the members of the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology.

Conflict of Interest defined: A conflict is present when an individual has an outside interest or the appearance of an outside influence that can be reasonably expected to influence how the individual might conduct Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology business. A conflict of interest exists whether the individual is actually swayed by the competing interest or not.

Policy Statements:

1. The Board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs), and staff shall disclose any possible conflict of interest in writing to the president prior to assuming office /position and throughout their tenure.
2. No individual has the authority to act on behalf of CANO/ACIO except with such authority as is approved by the Board of Directors.
3. Members of the board shall not enter into any proposed contract or transaction with the organization, except on a competitive basis in writing and where the member has declared any interest therein, and where he or she has absented himself or herself from the meeting and where he or she has refrained from voting. If a member of the board enters into a competitive request for proposals or applies for a contract opportunity, they must notify the board in writing of their intent. When it comes time to vote on proposals or applications that board member must remove herself/himself from the discussion and the vote. If successful, the board member must vacate their board of director position while fulfilling the contract for the organization.
4. Any member of the board or a committee who has an interest directly or indirectly in a proposed contract or transaction with the organization shall declare his or her interest in the contract or transaction at a meeting of the Board of Directors or the Committee. If the conflict is identified outside of a meeting the conflict of interest should be disclosed to the President of the Association immediately.
5. Board of Directors, Committee members (including committee chairs) and staff shall not vote on any proposed contract or transaction, with which they have a direct or indirect financial interest and shall declare the details of such interest prior to the discussion and vote on such matter. The member shall absent himself/herself from the meeting prior to the vote and is to refrain from discussing the issue with the decision makers or trying to influence.
6. Any board member who either directly or through a family relationship has an involvement with the organization as a user or provider of facilities and/or services of the association shall register in writing with the President the nature of the relationship. Any matters that present as a potential conflict of interest may be raised by any member of the board.
7. The Board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs) and staff shall arrange their private affairs in such a manner that will prevent real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest from arising.
8. Partnerships with private industry are acceptable when they produce mutual benefits to the members of the Association and will facilitate the Association's ability to enhance the quality of life of people with cancer and their families. Partnerships between CANO/ACIO and industry must support the mission of the Association.



9. On an ongoing basis the Board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs) and staff shall identify potential conflict of interest situations; assess whether there is a conflict; avoid conflicts where possible; and seek guidance about how to handle a conflict that cannot be avoided. Conflicts of interest are resolved in the interest of Association members with the least possible restriction on individual rights.

10. Use of information. The Board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs) and staff shall not knowingly take advantage of, or benefit from, information that is not generally available to the public but is obtained in the course of their official duties and responsibilities.

11. Policy Commitments. Decisions are made above all, in the interests of the members of the association. Individuals can be influenced by many variables including geographic constituency. The Board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs) shall not commit themselves in advance to a position that limits their ability to assess, analyze and judge issues and their discretion to vote.

12. Using Influence. After an individual leaves office or position as a Board member, members of the Board of Directors, Committee members (including committee chairs) and staff shall not act in a manner as to take improper advantage of their previous office or position.

13. Gifts and Benefits. The board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs), and staff shall not solicit any gifts or benefits, nor accept any gifts or benefits other than incidental gifts, items of customary hospitality or other benefits of nominal value when conducting CANO/ACIO business.

14. Committee and Other Appointments. All Committee and other appointments are made on the basis of qualifications and/or the ability to meet set requirements, criteria or specifications. The Board of Directors, committee members (including committee chairs), and staff shall not hire or appoint family members or close associates for CANO/ACIO projects/committee work unless by approval of the Executive in extenuating circumstances.

15. Bias. The Board of Directors, Committee members, ad hoc representatives and staff must represent unconflicted loyalty to the interests of CANO/ACIO consistent with the members' interest. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups, employer, and membership on other boards. Feelings of hostility or friendship and/or family relationships are recognized as possible sources of bias. If biases threaten to influence decisions and/or could create the appearance of unfairness, a conflict of interest shall be declared and consideration given to whether the individual should withdraw from decision making or involvement in the issue.

16. Awards. CANO/ACIO members have the opportunity to be recognized through a growing awards program. In order to avoid conflict of interest members of the Board of Directors of CANO/ACIO will not be eligible for CANO/ACIO awards (including the Helen Hudson and Schering Lectureships) during their terms. A term on the Board of Directors starts and ends at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Special consideration will be given to an individual who is an incoming Board member and who secures either the Helen Hudson or Schering Lectureship prior to starting their term on the Board of Directors of CANO-ACIO; that lecture can be delivered by the winner after the conclusion of the AGM without conflict.

Process for Handling Conflict of Interest



1. Any individual aware of a potential conflict of interest shall declare such to the President whose duty it will be to ensure that the conflict is discussed at the first meeting of the Executive Committee.

2. The Executive Committee shall decide if the matter should be brought to the Board of Directors upon hearing the declaration of conflict of interest for discussion if further measures are required to handle the situation.

3. The following should be taken into consideration by the Executive Committee:
what approach is consistent with the philosophy, values, mandate of the organization while least restricting to individual rights?
can the individual with the conflict be used as a resource, without being involved in the decision making?

4. The following steps may be necessary in handling the conflict:
requiring the individual who has the conflict of interest to leave the room while the subject is being discussed, and directing them to refrain from discussing the issue with the decision makers or trying to influence them
instructing the individual to divest themselves of the outside interest, or to transfer it to a neutral third party
accepting the individual's resignation if there is no way to resolve the conflict