



British Lung Foundation Working with the Pharmaceutical Industry

1. Introduction

The British Lung Foundation (BLF) provides support to people affected by any lung disease whether mild asthma or lung cancer and works for positive change in lung health. Through a range of services and by the funding of world class research we are well placed to do this.

The BLF recognises the importance of providing independent, impartial and up to date information and advice. Accepting funding or alternative forms of support from the pharmaceutical or related industries is something that must be approached with caution.

This document provides clear guidance on how the BLF works with these industries in the best interests of the charity and people affected by lung disease. It sets out the principles and guidelines on which decisions about funding opportunities are based, although the BLF will look at each relationship individually.

2. Context

The BLF has worked with a wide range of pharmaceutical companies while always maintaining its independence. We believe it is important to maintain cooperative relationships with companies that manufacture and market drugs and other treatments for those with respiratory illness, in order to foster communication between the people the BLF represents and the companies whose decisions will affect their treatment. We maintain relationships with a wide range of companies and are not reliant on a single one.

- 2.1. It is imperative that the high quality information provided by the BLF to people with lung disease is not influenced in any way by acceptance of pharmaceutical funding. The charity will withdraw from any initiative that risks jeopardising this independent stance.
- 2.2. The BLF will not embark on, or continue with, any sponsorship arrangement or collaborative venture which might damage its reputation.

3 Principles for partnership

The guidelines that follow are based on the following core principles:

- Integrity and openness
- Maintenance of independence
- Equality in partnership
- Mutual benefit for all parties.

3. Relationships between the BLF, the pharmaceutical and other related industries

3.1. Relationships between the BLF and individual pharmaceutical companies can and should be based on equal partnership.

3.2. Each party should recognise that successful partnerships are those where both partners benefit, and each should seek to understand the internal culture of, and external pressures on, the other.

3.3. The BLF will not enter into a relationship designed to give obvious competitive advantage to any company, and where possible we favour the use of funding consortia based on two or more companies working collectively. However, the BLF will enter into strategic partnerships with individual companies if these match our corporate objectives.

3.4. We recognise that patient groups and pharmaceutical companies inescapably have some shared interests. While we are not interested in profits, we are strongly committed to ensuring that people living with lung disease have access to the most effective, up-to-date treatments available. We would not be working in the interest of those with lung disease if we failed to make the case for equitable access to treatments that have been recommended as clinically and cost-effective.

3.5. The BLF accepts financial support from pharmaceutical companies and groups of companies on the following conditions:

- There are strong grounds for believing it will result in benefit to people living with lung disease, including our supporters.
- The Chief Executive is satisfied that no adverse publicity will result from accepting such support.
- There is no attempt on the part of the company or companies to influence BLF policy or actions either explicitly or implicitly.

4.

Guidelines for working together

- 4.1. The BLF will retain full editorial control maintain copyright over all publications and printed materials sponsored by a pharmaceutical company or companies.
- 4.2. The BLF must be consulted wherever and whenever its name is used for any communication, both internal and external. Approval must be sought for any copy produced which refers to a BLF initiative supported by a pharmaceutical company.
- 4.3. The BLF's logo must not be used by companies without written approval, and where used strict guidelines must be followed.
- 4.4. Press releases or other statements must not be issued which refer to the BLF without the charity's prior approval. Suggested quotes may be drafted but must not be used without agreement from either the BLF's Chief Executive or a designated manager from the charity.
- 4.5. When working on a joint initiative it is helpful if a single point of contact is identified within the company concerned to liaise with a named contact at the BLF.
- 4.6. The BLF is happy to work with PR, advertising and marketing agencies employed by pharmaceutical companies once a joint project is in progress. However, during the planning stage of such a project, the BLF requires a representative from the pharmaceutical company to be present as well as from the employed agency.
- 4.7. Written agreements will be produced for each joint initiative between the BLF and a pharmaceutical company, and formal contracts will be produced where required by law.
- 4.8. A company's support will be acknowledged appropriately following discussions with the company concerned.
- 4.9. The BLF will keep companies regularly informed of the progress of the initiative they are supporting.
5. **Product endorsement**
 - 5.1. The BLF supports the availability of the widest possible range of effective treatments, whether drugs or otherwise.
 - 5.2. The BLF does not endorse individual treatments, of any kind, because we believe that people living with lung disease need the widest possible

- 5.3. range of treatment options in order to access those most appropriate to their individual condition. The charity will not put itself in a position where it might be perceived to be endorsing or promoting a particular product.
- 5.4. However, if there is widespread consensus that a particular type of treatment might be beneficial for people living with lung disease - if, for example, it has been recommended by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) - then the charity has no hesitation in calling on NHS funders to make resources available to implement NICE guidance and make such treatments available and accessible.
- 5.5. The BLF seeks to encourage active partnership between patients and health professionals and the discussion of all available options, in the interests of informed choice on the part of the patient.

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