

College of Emergency Nursing Australasia

Conflicts of Interest Policy

1. Purpose and scope

The College of Emergency Nursing Australasia (the 'College') is committed to high standards of ethical conduct and, accordingly, places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflict of interest. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance in identifying and handling potential and actual conflicts of interest involving the College and its activities. This policy applies to all members of the National Board, committees, subcommittees or other person (the 'College entities') authorized to carry out any activity or function of the College.

2. Policy statement

College entities are obligated to avoid and disclose ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interests involving the College and remove themselves from a position of decision-making authority with respect to any conflict situation involving the College.

College entities should identify any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and take appropriate action to address such conflicts of interest as they arise.

3. Definitions

College member	Means a Member or Fellow of the College, as well as non-College members who hold a College appointment.
Family member	Includes spouse, domestic partner, parents, siblings, children, the spouse or partner of a parent, sibling or child, and any other relative who resides in the same household.
Actual conflict of interest	A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.
Perceived conflict of interest	Conflict exists where it could be perceived, or appears, that private interests could improperly influence the performance of duties – whether or not this is in fact the case.

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3.1 Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation which occurs if an interest or activity:

- influences, or appears to influence, the ability of the individual to exercise objectivity, or
- impairs, or appears to impair, the individual's ability to carry out responsibilities in the best interests of the College.

An individual is considered to have a potential conflict of interest when:

- he/she or any member of his/her family may receive a financial or other significant benefit as a result of the individual's position at the College
- he/she has the opportunity to influence the College's business, administrative or other material decisions in a manner that leads to personal gain or advantage
- he/she has an existing or potential financial or other significant interest that impairs, or might appear to impair, his/her independence in the discharge of his/her responsibilities to the College.

4. Acceptance of gifts or benefits

College entities should not solicit or accept any gifts or benefits which might in any way appear to compromise or influence them in their official capacity as described in Section 4.1 of the [Gifts and Benefits Policy](#). If the individual is in any doubt, guidance should be sought from the National Board.

If the College is engaged in a tender process, no gift or in-kind offers, no matter how small or insignificant, should be accepted from the tenderers.

5. Disclosure and management

A College entity of which he or she is potentially a member must disclose the interest to the relevant entity. If there is doubt as to the materiality of the interest, the executive members of the Board will decide as to whether conflict does or does not exist, with the ultimate decision being that of the Executive Director.

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The disclosure made must be recorded in the minutes of the relevant entity. An individual who has an interest in a matter before a College entity must not:

- take part in discussion by the entity relating to that matter while such discussion is taking place, be in, or in the vicinity of, the room in which that matter is being discussed
- vote in relation to that matter.

When deciding what kind of relationships, situations or affiliations should be disclosed, the individual should consider the situation from the perspective of a third party and whether the relationship, situation or affiliation is of such a nature that it could raise an allegation of an actual or perceived conflict of interest. In such cases, the individual should err on the side of transparency in order to alleviate or avoid future misunderstandings.

6. Breach of policy

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest is a breach of the Conflict of Interest Policy. The College entity must work cooperatively with the Executive Director or proxy to achieve a resolution of the conflict issues in the best interests of the College. Should an appearance of impropriety or actual conflict of interest exist, appropriate actions must be taken which will vary depending upon the particular facts, which may result in initiation of disciplinary action that could involve severance from the organisation if deemed to be an incident of misconduct, wrongdoing or an abuse of power or authority, including notifying relevant statutory authority and/or agency where breaches of relevant legislation may be evident.

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