

The APEC Mexico City Principles Section Seven: Educational Items and Gifts

What the APEC Principles say:

- A. Payments in cash or cash equivalents (such as gift certificates) or gifts for the personal benefit of healthcare professionals should not be provided or offered to healthcare professionals.
1. It is appropriate for Companies, where permitted by law or local codes of ethics, to offer items designed primarily for the education of patients or healthcare professionals if the items are of modest value and do not have value to healthcare professionals outside of his or her professional responsibilities.
 2. These items should not subsidize normal routine operations of a medical practice.

What this means:

For Companies: Ensure that there are appropriate policies, procedures and training for all company personnel who interact with healthcare professionals, consistent with these principles;

For Industry Associations: Show Leadership by developing and implementing ethical standards that embody these principles and require all member companies to adhere to them;

For Healthcare Professionals: Respect that the purpose of interacting with companies is to enhance knowledge about medicines and assist in providing the best possible patient care; and

For Patients: Expect that healthcare decisions are made with the well-being of patients as the first priority, independent from any improper influence from companies.

In practice, this means:

- Payments in cash must not be provided or offered to healthcare professionals;
- Also prohibited are cash equivalents (such as gift certificates) and any gifts for the personal benefit of healthcare professionals (NO sporting or entertainment tickets, electronic items etc.);
- It is appropriate where permitted by law to offer items designed primarily for the education of patients or health care professional (must be modest in value and not used outside of professional responsibilities); and
- Companies should not pay operational cost to Healthcare providers in kind or cash.