



PRINCIPLES ON

*Conduct of* CLINICAL TRIALS

*Communication of*

CLINICAL TRIAL RESULTS

**PhRMA**  
New Medicines. New Hope.®

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# PREAMBLE

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) represents research-based pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. Our members discover, develop, manufacture and market new medicines and vaccines to enable patients to live longer and healthier lives.

The development of new therapies to treat disease and improve quality of life is a long and complex process. A critical part of that process is clinical research, the study of a pharmaceutical product in humans (research participants). Clinical research involves both potential benefits and risks to the participants and to society at large. Investigational clinical research is conducted to answer specific questions, and some aspects of the therapeutic profile (benefits and risks) of the product(s) tested cannot be fully known without study in humans. In sponsoring and conducting clinical research, PhRMA members place great importance on respecting and protecting the safety of research participants.

Principles for the conduct of clinical research are set forth in internationally recognized documents, such as the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guideline for Good Clinical Practice of the International Conference on Harmonization (ICH). The prin-

principles of these and similar reference standards are translated into legal requirements through laws and regulations enforced by national authorities such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). PhRMA members have always been committed, and remain committed, to sponsoring clinical research that fully complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Many different entities and individuals contribute to the safe and appropriate conduct of clinical research, including not only sponsoring companies but also regulatory agencies; investigative site staff and medical professionals who serve as clinical investigators; hospitals and other institutions where research is conducted; and institutional review boards and ethics committees (IRBs/ECs).

PhRMA adopts these voluntary Principles to clarify our members' relationships with other individuals and entities involved in the clinical research process and to set forth the principles we follow.

The key issues addressed here are:

- Protecting Research Participants
- Conduct of Clinical Trials
- Ensuring Objectivity in Research
- Providing Information About Clinical Trials

These Principles reinforce our commitment to the safety of research participants, and they provide guidance to address issues that bear on this commitment in the context of clinical trials that enroll research participants and are designed, conducted and sponsored by member companies.

For purposes of these Principles, a “clinical trial” means an interventional trial involving human subjects from Phase 1 and beyond. For example, the term does not include the use of a drug in the normal course of medical practice or non-clinical laboratory studies.

These revised Principles take effect on October 1, 2009.



COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING  
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

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**W**e conduct clinical research in a manner that recognizes the importance of protecting the safety of and respecting research participants.

Our interactions with research participants, as well as with clinical investigators and the other persons and entities involved in clinical research, recognize this fundamental principle and reinforce the precautions established to protect research participants.

# CONDUCT OF CLINICAL TRIALS



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**W**e conduct high quality clinical research, including trials and observational studies, to test scientific hypotheses rigorously and gather bona fide scientific data in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, as well as locally recognized good clinical practice, wherever in the world clinical trials are undertaken. When conducting multinational, multi-site trials, in both the industrialized and developing world, we follow standards based on the Guideline for Good Clinical Practice of the ICH. In addition, clinical trial protocols are reviewed by independent IRBs/ECs as well as national health authorities.

**a. Clinical Trial Design.** Sponsors conduct clinical trials based on scientifically designed protocols, which balance potential risk to the research participant with the possible benefit to the participant and to society. Scientific, ethical and clinical judgments must guide and support the design of the clinical trial, particularly those aspects directly affecting the research participants such as inclusion/exclusion criteria, endpoints, and choice of control, including active and/or placebo comparator.

**b. Selection of Investigators.** Investigators are selected based on qualifications, training, research or clinical expertise in relevant fields, the potential to recruit research participants and the ability to conduct clinical trials in accordance with good clinical practices and applicable legal requirements.

**c. Training of Investigators.** Investigators and their staff are trained on the clinical trial protocol, pharmaceutical product, and procedural issues associated with the conduct of the particular clinical trial.

**d. IRB/EC Review.** Prior to commencement, each clinical trial protocol is reviewed by an IRB/EC that has independent decision-making authority, and has the responsibility and authority to protect research participants.

- The IRB/EC has the right to disapprove, require changes, or approve the clinical trial before any participants are enrolled at the institution or investigative site for which it has responsibility.

- The IRB/EC is provided relevant information from prior studies, the clinical trial protocol, and any materials developed to inform potential participants about the proposed research.

**e. Informed Consent.** We require that clinical investigators obtain and document informed consent, freely given without coercion, from all potential research participants.

- Potential research participants are to be adequately informed about potential benefits and risks, alternative procedures or treatments, nature and duration of the clinical trial, and provided the opportunity to ask questions about the study and receive answers from a qualified healthcare professional associated with the trial.
- Clinical investigators should disclose to potential research participants during the informed consent process that the investigator and/or the institution is receiving payment for the conduct of the clinical trial.
- In those cases where research participants — for reasons such as age, illness, or injury — are incapable of giving their consent, the informed consent of a legally acceptable representative is required.

- Because participation in a clinical trial is voluntary, all research participants have the right to withdraw from continued participation in the clinical trial, at any time, without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled.

**f. Clinical Trial Monitoring.** Trials are monitored using appropriately trained and qualified individuals. The sponsor will have procedures for these individuals to report on the progress of the trial, including possible scientific misconduct.

- These individuals verify compliance with good clinical practices, including (but not limited to) adherence to the clinical trial protocol, enrollment of appropriate research participants, and the accuracy and complete reporting of clinical trial data.
- If a sponsor learns that a clinical investigator is significantly deficient in any area, it will either work with the investigator to obtain compliance or discontinue the investigator's participation in the study, and notify the relevant authorities as required.

**g. Ongoing Safety Monitoring.** All safety issues are tracked and monitored in order to understand the safety profile of the product under study. Significant new safety information will be shared promptly with the clinical investigators and any Data and Safety Monitoring Board or Committee (DSMB), and reported to regulatory authorities in accordance with applicable law.

**h. Privacy and Confidentiality of Medical Information.** Sponsors respect the privacy rights of research participants and safeguard the confidentiality of their medical information in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

**i. Quality Assurance.** Procedures are followed to ensure that trials are conducted in accordance with good clinical practices and that data are generated, documented and reported accurately and in compliance with all applicable requirements.

**j. Clinical Trials Conducted in the Developing World.** When conducting clinical trials in the developing world, sponsors collaborate with investigators and seek to collaborate with other relevant parties, such as local health authorities and host governments, to address issues associated with the conduct of the proposed study and its follow-up.



ENSURING OBJECTIVITY  
.....  
IN RESEARCH

**W**e respect the independence of the individuals and entities involved in the clinical research process, so that they can exercise their judgment for the purpose of protecting research participants and to ensure an objective and balanced interpretation of trial results. Our contracts and interactions with them will not interfere with this independence.

**a. Independent Review and Safety Monitoring.** In certain studies, generally large, randomized, multi-site studies that evaluate interventions intended to prolong life or reduce risk of a major adverse health outcome, the patients, investigators and the sponsor may each be blinded to the treatment each participant receives to avoid the introduction of bias into the study. In such cases, monitoring of interim study results and of new information from external sources by a DSMB may be appropriate to protect the welfare of the research participants. If a DSMB is established, its members should have varied expertise, including relevant fields of medicine, statistics, and bioethics. Sponsors help establish, and also respect, the independence of DSMBs.

- Clinical investigators participating in a clinical trial of a pharmaceutical product should not serve on a DSMB that is monitoring that trial. It is also not appropriate for such an investigator to serve on DSMBs monitoring other trials with the same product if knowledge accessed through the DSMB membership may influence his or her objectivity.

- A voting member of a DSMB should not have significant financial interests or other conflicts of interest that would preclude objective determinations. Employees of the sponsor may not serve as members of the DSMB, but may otherwise assist the DSMB in its evaluation of clinical trial data.

**b. Payment to Research Participants.** Research participants provide a valuable service to society. They take time out of their daily lives and sometimes incur expenses associated with their participation in clinical trials. When payments are made to research participants:

- Any proposed payment should be reviewed and approved by an independent IRB/EC.
- Payments should be based on research participants' time and/or reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred during their participation in a clinical trial, such as parking, travel, and lodging expenses. Payment may be monetary and/or consist of items of modest value based on the factors noted above.
- The nature and amount of compensation or any other benefit should be consistent with the principle of voluntary informed consent.

c. **Payment to Clinical Investigators.** Payment to clinical investigators or their institutions should be reasonable and based on work performed by the investigator and the investigator's staff, not on any other considerations.

- A written contract or budgetary agreement should be in place, specifying the nature of the research services to be provided and the basis for payment for those services.
- Payments or compensation of any sort should not be tied to the outcome of clinical trials.
- Clinical investigators or their immediate family should not have a direct ownership interest in the specific pharmaceutical product being studied.
- Clinical investigators and institutions should not be compensated in company stock or stock options for work performed on individual clinical trials.
- When enrollment is particularly challenging, reasonable additional payments may be made to compensate the clinical investigator or institution for time and effort spent on extra recruiting efforts to enroll appropriate research participants.

- When clinical investigators and their staff are required to travel to meetings in conjunction with a clinical trial, they may be compensated for their time and offered reimbursement for reasonable travel, lodging, and meal expenses. The venue and circumstances should be appropriate for the purpose of the meeting; specifically, resorts are not appropriate venues. While modest meals or receptions may be appropriate during company-sponsored meetings with investigators, companies should not provide recreational or entertainment events in conjunction with these meetings. It is not appropriate to pay honoraria or travel or lodging expenses for those who are not involved in the clinical trial.

**d. Potential Conflicts of Interest.** A potential conflict of interest exists, in the research setting, whenever an investigator's professional judgment could be influenced by a secondary interest, such as a potential financial gain, career advancement, outside employment, personal considerations or relationships, investments, gifts, payment for services, and board memberships. In the strict sense, some conflict of interest may exist in all research settings. For example, physicians who are specialists and/or leaders in their field are often extensively engaged by both the private and public sectors to provide their expertise. Further, by the nature of their practices, there are often a limited number of physicians who are best qualified to ensure that a specific trial will be able to reach and enroll the required number of patients.

Physicians are subject to an array of professional standards and ethical obligations, including institutional disclosure policies and government regulations regarding disclosure of potential financial conflicts of interest in clinical research during the drug approval process. Companies should recognize and support physicians and researchers in meeting these standards and ethical obligations, including the following requirements for authorship:

- When authors submit a manuscript to a medical journal, whether an article or a letter, they are responsible for disclosing all financial and personal relationships that might bias their work. To prevent ambiguity, authors should state explicitly whether potential conflicts do or do not exist.
- Authors should identify individuals who provide writing or other assistance and disclose the funding source for this assistance. Authors should describe the role of the study sponsor(s), if any, in study design; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; in the writing of the report; and in the decision to submit the report for publication. If the sponsor had no such involvement, the authors should so state.

# PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT ..... CLINICAL TRIALS



**A**merica's pharmaceutical research companies are committed to the transparency of clinical trials that are sponsored by our member companies. We recognize that there are important public health benefits associated with making appropriate clinical trial information widely available to healthcare practitioners, patients, and others. Such disclosure must maintain protections for individual privacy, intellectual property, and contract rights, as well as conform to legislation and current national practices in patent law.

Availability of information about clinical trials and their results in a timely manner is often critical to communicate important new information to the medical profession, patients and the public. We design and conduct clinical trials in an ethical and scientifically rigorous manner to determine the benefits, risks, and value of pharmaceutical products. As sponsors, we are responsible for receipt and verification of data from all research sites for the studies we conduct; we ensure the accuracy and integrity of the entire study database, which is owned by the sponsor.

### a. Clinical Trial Registration and Communication of Study Results.

Clinical trials may involve already marketed products and/or investigational products. We commit to the timely submission and registration on a public database of summary information about all clinical trials that we conduct involving the use of our marketed or investigational products in patients. We also commit to the timely submission and posting of summary results of all clinical trials conducted in patients involving the use of our products that are approved for marketing, or that are investigational products whose development programs are discontinued, regardless of outcome. In addition, if information from any clinical trial is felt to be of significant medical importance, then we will work with investigators to publish the data.

### b. Authorship and Research Contributors.

**1. Authors.** Consistent with standards of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and major journal guidelines for authorship, anyone who: (1) provides substantial contributions into the conception or design of a study, or data acquisition, or data analysis and interpretation; and (2) writes or revises the manuscript involving important intellectual content; and (3) has final approval of the version to be published, should receive appropriate recognition as an author when the manuscript is published. Conversely, individuals who do not contribute in this manner do not warrant authorship. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.

- All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify with respect to each of the three criteria should be listed by companies; although journals may restrict the number of authors who may be listed. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.
- When a large, multi-center group has conducted the work, the group should identify the individuals who accept direct responsibility for the manuscript. Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group, alone, does not justify authorship.
- All authors, whether from within a sponsoring company or external, will be given the relevant statistical tables, figures, and reports needed to support the planned publication.

2. *Contributors.* Like other research sponsors, companies sometimes employ staff to help analyze and interpret data, and to produce manuscripts and presentations. Such personnel must act in conjunction with the investigator-author. Their contributions should be recognized appropriately in resulting publications — either as a named author or in acknowledgments, depending on their level of contribution.

- Contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an acknowledgments section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support.
- Groups of persons who have contributed materially to the paper but whose contributions do not justify authorship may be listed under a heading such as “clinical investigators” or “participating investigators,” and their function or contribution should be described — for example, “served as scientific advisors,” “critically reviewed the study proposal,” “collected data,” or “provided and cared for study patients.”
- Authors should declare whether or not they had assistance with study design, data collection, data analysis, or manuscript preparation. If such authorship assistance was available, the authors should disclose the identity of the people that provided the assistance and any entity that supported it in the published article. Financial and material support should also be acknowledged.

**c. Related Publications.** For a multi-site clinical trial, analyses based on single-site data usually have significant statistical limitations, and frequently do not provide meaningful information for healthcare professionals or patients and therefore may not be supported by sponsors. Such reports should not precede and should always reference the primary presentation or paper of the entire study.

**d. Investigator Access to Data and Review of Results.** We seek to provide investigators with meaningful access to clinical data from the studies in which they participate. Individual investigators in multi-site clinical trials will have their own research participants' data, and will be provided the randomization code after conclusion of the trial. Sponsors will make a summary of the study results available to the investigators. In addition any investigator who participated in the conduct of a multi-site clinical trial will be able to review relevant statistical tables, figures, and reports for the entire study at the sponsor's facilities, or other mutually agreeable location.

Sponsors will provide all investigators with a full summary of the study results regardless of whether the investigator is an author or otherwise contributes to the publication on the study. This summary could be the primary manuscript submitted for publication, a slide presentation, or a synopsis of the sponsor's Clinical Study Report (CSR).

Investigators who participated in the conduct of a multi-site clinical trial and are interested in more extensive data displays will be able to review data for the entire study at the sponsor's facility or other mutually agreeable location in response to a reasonable scientific inquiry. Investigators who are authors of study-related manuscripts will be given all study data needed to support the publication.

**e. Research Participant Communication.** Clinical studies are collaborations between research participants, investigators, and research sponsors. Investigators are encouraged to communicate a summary of the trial results, as appropriate, to their research participants after conclusion of the trial. As research sponsors, we will support investigators in this regard.

**f. Sponsor Review.** Sponsors have the right to review any manuscripts, presentations, or abstracts that originate from our studies or that utilize our data before they are submitted for publication or other means of communication. Sponsors commit to respond in a timely manner, and not suppress or veto publications or other appropriate means of communication (in rare cases it may be necessary to delay publication and/or communication for a short time to protect intellectual property). Where differences of opinion or interpretation of data exist, the parties should try to resolve them through appropriate scientific debate.

#### g. Provision of Clinical Trial Protocol for Journal Review.

If requested by a medical journal when reviewing a submitted manuscript for publication, the clinical trial sponsor will provide a synopsis of the clinical trial protocol and/or pre-specified plan for data analysis with the understanding that such documents are confidential and should be returned to the sponsor.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Q & A

Under these Principles, may a clinical investigator who owns stock in Company A be employed to conduct a clinical trial sponsored by Company A?

Yes. Ownership of stock in the sponsoring company does not disqualify the investigator from participating in clinical research for the company. However, sponsors may not compensate investigators with stock or stock options for work performed on individual clinical trials. Under the laws and regulations of some countries, stock ownership by investigators may need to be disclosed to regulatory authorities.

A physician has discovered a potential product. The physician licenses the compound to Company B for a royalty payment for any future sales. Can the physician be a clinical investigator of that compound for Company B?

No. Direct ownership interests in a product (such as patent rights or rights to royalty payments) present an inherent conflict of interest, which could introduce bias into the conduct of the clinical trial. Companies that acquire rights to products which have arrangements that are in conflict with the above should take reasonable steps to modify the relationship.

Company C has just completed a controlled clinical trial evaluating the efficacy and safety in patients of an investigational product versus placebo. The trial provides no information other than the relative merits of the investigational product versus placebo. Does Company C have a commitment to communicate the results of this trial?

Perhaps. If the product is ultimately approved for marketing, the results could help inform patient care and therefore should be communicated in a timely manner after marketing approval is obtained. If the company is still developing the product, disclosing the results prematurely could cause the company to jeopardize important intellectual property. If, however, a company discontinues the development of a drug product, under these Principles, the company should post a summary of clinical trial results conducted in patients.

Importantly, under these Principles if the clinical trial results are thought to be of significant medical importance, the sponsor should work with investigators to communicate the results of the trial through posting or publication.

Principle 4 states that companies commit to providing registration and results information about clinical trials conducted “in patients.” What is meant by this?

The most important clinical trials are those that test a medicine on subjects who actually require medical care: patients. The results of trials such as these are integral to drug development, because they provide medical evidence regarding the safety and effectiveness of medicines in the population intended to use the medicine. These are the clinical trials for which companies commit to providing information. Therefore, companies commit to providing registry and results information to applicable clinical trials involving patients. By contrast, some very early exploratory clinical trials (i.e., most Phase 1 studies) typically involve limited testing in a small set of healthy adults, and therefore do not generally provide robust information regarding safety or effectiveness. Because these studies typically involve healthy adults, a clinical trial registry would not be useful for patients seeking to enter such trials. In addition, due to their small size, and because such studies would not provide safety or effectiveness data in actual patients, results information would be limited. Of course, the FDA and other national health authorities receive detailed and timely reports of significant safety information regarding clinical trials for drugs seeking approval.

Principle 4 states that submission of registration information for clinical trials conducted in patients should be “timely.” What does “timely” mean?

Companies typically submit applicable clinical trials to a government clinical trial database (e.g., [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov) operated by the U.S. National Library of Medicine) within 21 days of the enrollment of the first patient. This is an appropriate standard under these Principles.

Where will clinical trials be registered and results posted?

Companies commit to registering clinical trials and posting results on a publicly available web site, including [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov).

Principle 4 states that submission and posting of clinical trial results should be “timely.” What does “timely” mean?

Generally for approved products, companies submit applicable clinical trial results to a government database by the latter of 12 months after the trial ends or within 30 days after approval of the drug. This is an appropriate standard under these Principles. For unapproved products whose development program has been discontinued, companies commit to posting results within one year of such discontinuation.

Principle 4 states that companies should submit and post results of clinical trials conducted in patients involving the use of investigational products whose development programs are discontinued. What does “discontinued” mean?

Under these Principles, a development program is discontinued when the company is no longer studying the applicable molecule, does not expect to resume development, and has no plans for the molecule on its own or through collaboration or out-licensing.

Company D has completed an exploratory, controlled clinical trial in healthy adults of a product involving a novel and highly proprietary study design. Should Company D communicate the results of this trial?

Perhaps. Exploratory trials conducted in healthy adults rarely provide information of significant medical importance. However, if such a trial did provide significant medical information, sponsors should work with the investigators to communicate the results of the trial.

When a company registers a clinical trial, what information must be provided?

Governments and health organizations have settled on standard data elements for clinical trial registries. For example, the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007 (FDAAA) established a standard listing of data elements that should be posted for applicable clinical trials. The FDAAA data elements, which are substantially similar

to a list developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), includes the following information:

- *Descriptive information*, including: a brief title, a brief summary, the primary purpose, the study design, the study phase, study type, the primary disease or condition being studied or the focus of the study, the intervention name and intervention type, the study start date, the expected completion date, the target number of subjects, and outcomes, including primary and secondary outcome measures;
- *Recruitment information*, including: eligibility criteria, gender, age limits, whether the trial accepts healthy volunteers, overall recruitment status, and individual site status;
- *Location and contact information*, including: the name of the sponsor, the responsible party by official title, and the facility name and facility contact information; and
- *Administrative data*, including: the unique protocol identification number and other protocol identification numbers, if any.

For clinical trials subject to the FDAAA, companies should list the data elements required by the statute. In addition, companies should consider providing the FDAAA data elements for all other clinical trials covered in these Principles, except if providing such information could jeopardize the intellectual property protection with respect to the product. During the course of a clinical trial, a significant amount of information may be collected, including routine laboratory values and radiological images (e.g., x-ray and magnetic resonance images). Consistent with the FDAAA, the collection of such information would not be registered unless the value is being used in the evaluation of a primary or secondary clinical outcome according to the clinical trial protocol. Clinical trials required to be posted under FDAAA must be posted on [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov). Trials not covered by the FDAAA requirements could be posted on a publicly available web site including [www.ClinicalTrials.gov](http://www.ClinicalTrials.gov) or [www.ClinicalStudyResults.org](http://www.ClinicalStudyResults.org).

When a company provides results of a clinical trial, what information must be provided?

At a minimum, companies commit to providing basic information about the study design, study population, primary and secondary outcomes, as well as serious or frequent adverse events. Of course, companies may choose to provide additional information either voluntarily or subject to governmental requirements.

## What is the ICH Guideline for Good Clinical Practice (GCPs) and in which jurisdictions does it apply?

The ICH Guideline for Good Clinical Practice (GCPs) is an international standard for designing, conducting, recording, and reporting clinical research involving human participants. Compliance with GCPs assures that the rights, safety and well-being of human participants are protected and that clinical trial data are credible. The GCPs were developed using best practices from many countries, as well as the WHO. They were published in 1996 as part of the ICH and are intended to apply in the European Union, Japan, and the United States. However, PhRMA encourages its members to apply the GCPs to studies conducted in all countries, including the developing world. Applying GCPs broadly helps assure that certain minimum ethical standards are consistently applied in countries that may not have rules or laws governing clinical trial conduct.

## How does the relationship between the company and the investigator affect the publication of clinical trial results?

The roles and responsibilities for publishing clinical trial results can be significantly affected by the relationship between the pharmaceutical company and the investigator. As a general matter, if the company acts as the sponsor of a clinical trial, it should work with the investigator to publish or disclose results from clinical trials of drugs. If the investigator acts as the trial sponsor, either with or without the

knowledge or assistance of the company, it is the investigator's sole responsibility to ensure that the results are published or disclosed since the company did not sponsor the study (and might not even be aware of it).

The Principles state that investigators “will be able to review relevant statistical tables, figures, and reports” with regard to the entire study. Please define “relevant” in this context.

For purposes of investigator access to data, relevance refers to data from the trial and is determined by the study design and pre-stated research objectives. Simply stated, investigators will be given access to any tables, figures, and reports they need from the study that are related to the hypothesis being tested or explored or which are needed in order to understand the results of the study.

Is it appropriate to include extra participants in a clinical trial in order to allow more investigators to gain experience with the product being studied?

No. Clinical trials must be designed with the scientifically necessary number of participants to achieve the intended outcome; too few or too many participants are both signs of poor study design.

May companies perform clinical trials or observational studies just to provide healthcare professionals with experience using a medicine?

No. Clinical trials and observational studies should be performed only to test legitimate scientific hypotheses or to gather bona fide data about a medicine. Consistent with GCP, before a clinical trial is initiated, “foreseeable risks and inconveniences should be weighed against the anticipated benefit for the individual trial subject and society. A trial should be initiated and continued only if the anticipated benefits justify the risks.” International Conference on Harmonization, ICH E6, Guideline for Good Clinical Practice (2002). We note that it is possible that a regulatory agency may require certain clinical trials or observational studies as part of a risk management program for a medicine. Such clinical research may measure compliance or the behavior of healthcare professionals. If such a trial is required or reviewed as part of a risk management plan, it would be appropriate under these Principles.

The Principles state that research participants may be compensated for their time and reasonable expenses incurred during their participation in a clinical trial. Can such payment be made contingent upon completion of the clinical trial?

No. While the entire payment should not be contingent upon completion of the study, payment of a small portion as an incentive for completion of the study is acceptable, provided that such incentive is not excessive. All proposed payments to research participants (amount and method) must be reviewed and approved by an independent IRB/EC prior to the commencement of a clinical trial.

How do companies ensure the quality and integrity of clinical trial data for trials they sponsor?

PhRMA member companies work hard to assure the quality and integrity of their clinical research. One of the most important safeguards is compliance with the GCPs developed by the ICH. We select investigators and others who are trained in GCPs for the design, conduct, performance, monitoring, auditing, recording, analysis, and reporting of clinical trials, which provides assurance that the data and reported results are credible and accurate, and that the rights, integrity, and confidentiality of trial participants are protected. Under these Principles PhRMA member companies that sponsor clinical trials commit to adhere to the GCPs.

Furthermore, PhRMA members spend considerable resources monitoring clinical investigators to assure compliance with GCPs and the study protocol, as well as protection of participant safety, and accurate collection and reporting of data. Sponsors also often have separate review groups conduct audits of investigator sites and of the study data to verify that the sponsor's routine monitoring procedures ensure data integrity. Sponsors work closely with regulatory agencies and with IRBs/ECs to provide for independent audits of investigators and of the sponsor's own clinical trial practices. The FDA conducts more than 500 inspections of clinical investigators annually, including foreign sites.

What safety information do sponsors report to regulatory authorities about their trials? Can sponsors choose what safety information they report?

Sponsors cannot choose what safety information they report. Instead, they are required by local laws to report comprehensive safety information to regulatory authorities (and clinical investigators) throughout the clinical trial process and even after a drug product is approved and marketed. For example, sponsors typically are subject to the following safety reporting requirements:

- During the clinical trial, sponsors are obligated to record and evaluate all safety information they receive from investigators or from any other source. If a sponsor receives adverse event information that suggests a potential significant safety concern for the sponsored trial, the sponsor must notify all investi-

gators in the trial and the health authorities in an expedited fashion. For example, in the U.S. and some other countries, sponsors must report unexpected serious adverse events within 15 days, and life-threatening adverse events within seven days.

- Sponsors must maintain and distribute to clinical investigators and to IRBs/ECs an Investigator's Brochure that summarizes all relevant safety information about the investigational product, including a description of possible risks and side effects. The Investigator's Brochure must be updated periodically to keep investigators informed of new safety risks discovered during the study.
- In most countries, sponsors must report to the regulatory authorities the final results of the study, including all safety information. In some countries (including the U.S.), reports summarizing all safety information for the product are required to be submitted by the sponsor on an annual basis.
- Upon approval of a medicinal product, the holder of a marketing authorization must continue to monitor the safety of the approved product, report significant safety concerns in an expedited fashion, and regularly summarize and communicate all relevant safety information to the regulatory authorities. If important new safety information is discovered after approval, holders

of marketing authorizations must update the product information (e.g., product labeling, patient information leaflet).

If significant new safety information is identified after participants have signed the informed consent form, will they be advised by the sponsor of the new information?

Yes. Participants will be provided with significant new findings identified during the study, which may affect their willingness to continue participation. Sponsors collect information on new adverse experiences from all investigators participating in the research study and then notify all the other investigators of this new safety information. Investigators then inform their IRB/EC and if the sponsor, investigator, or the IRB/EC believes this new information should be communicated to patients, the consent form will be updated with significant new safety information. Participants are informed of the significant new information by the investigator through the consent process when the informed consent form is updated.

## How do clinical trial sponsors handle conflicts of interest?

While physicians face conflicts of interest in all aspects of their work, they are expected to put patient care above all other concerns. As such, they are subject to an array of professional standards and ethical obligations. Pursuant to these PhRMA Principles, sponsors may not use investigators if investigators or their immediate family have a direct ownership interest in the investigational product, and sponsors may not compensate investigators in company stock or stock options. In the U.S., the FDA requires sponsors to collect and disclose information on investigators' financial interests that exceed defined thresholds when the sponsor submits a product for regulatory approval. Investigators must also meet local requirements imposed by their institutions and/or the institutional review board or ethics committee. Most medical journals monitor conflicts of interest by reviewing the financial interests of authors, require the disclosure of affiliations and financial interests in the articles they publish, and reserve the right to reject publications involving significant conflicts of interest. Under these PhRMA Principles, when authors submit a manuscript to a medical journal, they are responsible for disclosing all financial and personal relationships that might bias their work. Finally, potential bias from a conflict of interest is also managed by sponsors using double-blind study designs (e.g., neither the physician nor the patient knows whether the patient is receiving the study drug or the placebo or comparator drug), multiple investigators, contractual provisions in the sponsor-investigator clinical trial agreement, periodic auditing of investigator sites by third parties, and other Good Clinical Practice requirements that are commonly used in clinical trials.

## How are participants protected when clinical trials are conducted in the developing world?

The Principles affirm that clinical trials in the developing world must be conducted in accordance with ethical principles established by the Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice of the ICH, in addition to applicable laws and regulations and the requirements of local ethics committees. PhRMA members recognize the challenges inherent in applying the standards of the developed world to trials in developing countries. Informed consent is a cornerstone of ethical clinical research and should be obtained in a manner that is understandable by the research participant, consistent with local requirements, regardless of the location of the clinical trial, and in writing whenever possible. Our members work with local governments, non-governmental organizations associated with the United Nations, and local institutions to ensure the appropriate selection of research participants, appropriate use of placebo comparators, and access to post-trial treatment for research participants.

Are research participants told about all archival or secondary uses of their tissue and health information? Why are the samples stored for so many years, and can they be used for other purposes?

Potential research participants are informed in the informed consent or authorization process when identifiable tissue, samples, or information collected during a clinical trial will be archived for future uses by the investigator, the investigator's institution, or the sponsor. If research using archival biological materials is to occur, investigators need to inform participants of this possibility. Identified samples will only be used for future research according to the scope and duration defined in the informed consent or for purposes that are permitted by law. The samples may be kept for many years, for example, so that if new relevant research assays are discovered during that time, the samples can also be tested with them. If the participant withdraws from a study, the participant may ask that any unused portion of their stored sample be destroyed. Whether the sample can be destroyed will depend on whether it can be identified by the sponsor.

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