



Report of the Task Force on Sponsorship of NABP District and Annual Meetings

Members Present:

Larry Mokhiber (NY), *chair*; Curtis Black (District 4 Secretary/Treasurer); Rich Palombo (NJ); Stuart Williams (MN).

Others Present:

Jeanne Waggener, *Executive Committee liaison*; Carmen Catizone; Larry Strass, Eileen Lewalski; Dana Oberman, *NABP staff*.

Introduction:

The Task Force on Sponsorship of NABP District and Annual Meetings met on October 21, 2015, at NABP Headquarters. This task force was established in response to Resolution 111-12-15, Ensuring Public Confidence in NABP and Its Member Pharmacy Boards, which was not approved by the NABP membership at the Association's 111th Annual Meeting in May 2015.

Review of the Task Force Charge:

Task force members reviewed their charge and accepted it as follows:

1. Review present practices and policies for accepting sponsorships and grants for NABP District and Annual Meetings.
2. Recommend alternatives on whether to further restrict or replace such sponsorships and grants with other means of support that will maintain the high quality including objective and unbiased presentations and activities at the meetings.

Recommendation 1: NABP Should Revise Its Recognition of Annual Meeting Sponsorships.

The task force recommends that NABP revise its recognition of Annual Meeting sponsorships in order to address any perceived bias or potential conflicts of interest in regard to meeting sponsors.

Background:

The task force examined and discussed the funding NABP receives in order to support programming at its Annual Meeting. The task force reviewed the following information:

- Resolution 111-12-15, Ensuring Public Confidence in NABP and Its Member Pharmacy Boards
- Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards for Commercial Support
- Example of non-commercialism letter of agreement
- Sponsorship for district meetings correspondence

- Federation of State Medical Boards and National Council of State Boards of Nursing correspondence regarding sponsorships
- NABP Annual Meeting financial data
- Federal Trade Commission Staff Guidance on Active Supervision of State Regulatory Boards Controlled by Market Participants

Task force members discussed the above materials and while they agreed that there have been no improprieties involved and appropriate safeguards are in place for the acceptance and use of sponsorship funding provided to NABP, however the situation remains that entities regulated by the state boards of pharmacy were providing funding, and as such could be creating an unwanted and unwarranted perception requiring further consideration. The task force discussed NABP enacting a policy prohibiting such funding and/or establishing additional means for addressing any perceived bias or potential conflicts of interest and determined changes should be implemented.

Recommendation 2: NABP Should Continue to Allow Sponsorship of CPE Sessions at the Annual Meeting.

The task force recommends that NABP continue to allow sponsorship of continuing pharmacy education (CPE) sessions at the Annual Meeting because of the oversight and safeguards afforded through the ACPE standards as an ACPE-accredited provider of CPE.

Background:

The task force recognized that programming and support for those components of the Annual Meeting designed to provide CPE and assist members of state boards of pharmacy in their roles as regulators must continue to follow the standards and safeguards required by ACPE, specifically those listed in Standard 5: Standards for Commercial Support.¹ Members stressed that adherence to the standards ensured that no actual or perceived bias could exist and therefore, NABP could continue to accept sponsorship funds for CPE provided at the Annual Meeting.

Recommendation 3: NABP Should Examine and Enact Policy Regarding How Non-CPE Sponsors Are Currently Recognized at the Annual Meeting.

The task force recommends that NABP examine and enact policy regarding how non-CPE sponsors are currently recognized and, in collaboration with sponsors, determine alternate means to recognize sponsorship that does not convey any perceived bias or potential conflicts of interest.

Background:

The task force discussed NABP enacting a policy not to accept such sponsor funding or establishing additional means for addressing the perception of bias or potential conflicts of interest. The task force determined that separate and distinct sponsorship for other activities at the Annual Meeting that provide opportunities for board members to exchange ideas and share

¹ Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, Accreditation Standards for Continuing Pharmacy Education, Standard 5: Standards for Commercial Support at https://www.acpe-accredit.org/pdf/SCS_Standard%205_February%202009_update.pdf, accessed October 30, 2015.

best practices and may cover such items as food, lodging, or travel should be noted separately and the conditions for sponsorship, currently in place, should be noted and fully explained in the programming material for the Annual Meeting. Members further discussed this issue and agreed that the NABP Executive Committee should examine the various ways that sponsors are currently recognized and, working with sponsors, determine alternate means of recognition that do not convey the perception addressed by the task force and could include such items as:

- Listing the sponsorships collectively in the program materials and not following each program notation so as to disconnect sponsorship from specific activities.
- Noting sponsorships during the Report of the Treasurer rather than the Report of the President.
- Refraining from identifying individual sponsors before and/or after each sponsored session.
- Eliminating sponsor names from any Annual Meeting placards or signage.

Recommendation 4: NABP Should Work With the Districts to Develop and Implement Consistent Requirements and Monitoring Processes for Receiving and Utilizing Sponsorships Parallel to NABP.

The task force recommends that NABP work with the districts in order to develop and implement consistent requirements and monitoring processes for receiving and utilizing sponsorships that parallel those implemented by NABP.

Background:

Task force members also discussed sponsorship at the district meetings and the need to protect against the same perception of bias and potential conflicts of interest that exist at the national level as for the Annual Meeting. It was concluded that while NABP could still provide quality programming for the Annual Meeting without accepting sponsorships, the districts would suffer if all sponsorship was eliminated as they rely on sponsor support to hold their meetings. Members decided that the policy ultimately implemented for NABP and the Annual Meeting could be used in the future as a model guide for the districts to consider.