

Institute of Health Economics (IHE) Board Code of Conduct & Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose: The Institute of Health Economics (IHE) has determined that for the purposes of good governance and appropriate corporate practice that the Institute should adopt a formal disclosure and conflict of interest policy for its' Board members. This is not in response to any issues of concern but to articulate clearly to Board members and external stakeholders the Institute of Health Economics' policy in this area to ensure ongoing stakeholder confidence and trust in the organization.

Overview of Organization: The Institute of Health Economics (IHE) is a non- profit organization registered in the Province of Alberta, which receives funding support from a number of sources including the Alberta Government, Universities, and health system stakeholders from the public and private sector. The IHE conducts work supported through funding by many partners through grants and contracts, including the organizations which Board members represent. These grants and contracts are transparently disclosed in financial and project reporting and would not generally be considered personal conflicts of interest for declaration by Board members.

There are specific processes related to transparency and conflict of interest which would apply to funded research projects in their publication and dissemination which would apply to staff, academic research partners and contracted personnel. The specific policy outlined in this document relates directly to Board members of the Institute of Health Economics in performing their governance role.

General guidance for Board members. It is expected that every Board member shall:

- perform their official duties in such a manner that stakeholder confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of IHE and its products and programs are conserved and enhanced;
- not directly or indirectly use, or personally benefit from IHE funds for purposes other than for the conduct of approved IHE business;
- not solicit or accept transfers of economic benefit in association with IHE
- activities, other than incidental gifts, customary hospitality, or other benefits of nominal value;
- not accord preferential treatment in relation to any official matter to family members or friends, or to organizations in which the employee, family members or friends have an interest;
- not directly or indirectly use, or allow the use of IHE property of any kind for anything other than officially approved activities.

- not place, nor appear to place, the IHE in any situation where they are under obligation to any person/supplier who might benefit from or seek to gain special consideration or favor based on a sponsorship/co- sponsorship/donation.
- Disclose relevant conflicts of interest at the beginning of each Board meeting and recuse themselves from discussion and/or voting on a particular matter where they may have a conflict of interest.

A person will not be regarded as having a conflict of interest in a matter if the interest is determined so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence a person in considering, discussing or working on a particular matter

Definition of conflict of Interest:

A conflict of interest may arise in a situation in which a personal interest of a Board member conflicts, potentially conflicts, or appears to conflict with or influence the objective exercise or proper discharge of the Board members duties to the Institute of Health Economics.

Conflicts are generally divided into the following categories:

- **An actual conflict of interest** refers to a situation where a Board member exercises a power or performs a duty or responsibility, and in so doing, there is the opportunity to further his or her personal interest.
- **A potential conflict of interest** refers to a situation where a personal interest of a Board member could influence the exercise of his or her duties or responsibilities; and
- **An apparent conflict of interest** refers to a situation where informed people might reasonably hold the apprehension that a conflict of interest exists on the part of a Board member in relation to a personal interest.

Protocol of Conflict of Interest Disclosure:

The overall approach is based on transparency and disclosure.

- Where an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest situation exists a Board member must disclose the situation to the Board Chair.
- Where an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest situation exists for the Board Chair the Board Chair would disclose that to the Vice-Chair (rotating position between the Vice-President's Research of the Universities of Alberta and Calgary).
- Significant conflict of interest situations that may require Board policy change would be referred to the Executive Committee of the Board for
- recommendation and action.

- Each Board member is responsible for taking such action as is necessary to prevent real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest.
- Board members are responsible for disclosing any situation where the individual believes there is, or might be, or appear to be, a potential, actual or
- apparent conflict of interest.
- Disclosure would occur through regular Board meetings and recorded in the minutes and it is not proposed at this time for a formal Declaration of Conflict of Interest annually by Board members. (for discussion).
- It is proposed that Board members sign an Acknowledgement and Agreement certification attesting they have received, read and will conscientiously and in
- good faith observe the provisions in “*IHE Policy on Disclosure and Conflict of Interest.*” (Appendix A).
- There is a draft annual conflict of interest declaration that might be considered for implementation which would remove the need for regular disclosure of ongoing conflicts at each Board meeting. (Appendix B)

Conflicts related to Board and Committee Agenda Items

- General Declaration of Conflicts of Interest will be requested verbally as part of regular Board meetings.
- During the meeting if there are specific agenda items which Board members deem they should formally recuse themselves from, that can be discussed at the point of the particular agenda item, and a decision made on action by the full Board and if it is deemed necessary the Board member would recuse
- themselves from either discussion and/or voting on the item.
- When there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, the matter shall be resolved by vote of the Board of Directors, excluding the person(s) concerning whose situation the doubt has arisen

Record of Conflict

The official minutes of the Board meetings shall reflect that the conflict of interest was disclosed and the interested person(s) did not participate in the final discussion or vote and did not vote on the matter.

Attachments:

- Acknowledgement and Agreement Certification
- Annual Conflict of Interest Declaration

Last updated: March, 2019



Schedule A: Acknowledgement and Agreement Certification

IHE Policy on Conflict of Interest and Disclosure

As a Board member of the Institute of Health Economics (IHE), I acknowledge and agree that:

- 1) I have received a copy and read the “Institute of Health Economics (IHE) Policy on Disclosure and Conflict of Interest”.
- 2) I will conscientiously and in good faith observe the provisions in “IHE Policy on Disclosure and Conflict of Interest.”

I understand it is my obligation to avoid conflicts of interest when making decisions on behalf of the Institute of Health Economics (IHE) and that I must disclose those activities, relationships and interests which might or be perceived to constitute a conflict of interest in performing my duties as a Board member of the Institute of Health Economics.

Name:

Signature of Certification

Date

Documents to be kept on file by IHE Board Secretary



Schedule B: Conflict Disclosure - Annual Declaration

IHE Policy on Conflict of Interest and Disclosure

To: The Institute of Health Economics Board of Directors

I, certify, after due consideration, that to the best of my knowledge, I do not have any potential, actual or apparent conflicts in the execution of my duties as a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Health Economics.

True / False (circle one)

If I have selected "False" above, a Conflict may exist for which the relevant people and circumstances are fully described below:

Name:

Signature of Certification

Date

Documents to be kept on file by IHE Board Secretary