



news release

R&D biopharmaceutical industry revamp ethical code to apply as base line of industry behavior worldwide

- New R&D biopharmaceutical industry Code of Practice comes into effect on 1 January 2019.
- Changes reflect increasingly complex dilemmas faced by R&D biopharmaceutical industry professionals which call just as much for rules, as for strong ethical values that can build a culture of trust.
- New Code of Practice aims to improve guidance to IFPMA members on how to conduct business when interacting with the healthcare community worldwide.

5 December 2018, Geneva - The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) is guiding its member companies and associations worldwide to adopt a new industry [Code of Practice](#), coming into effect on 1 January 2019. The 2019 Code is marked by two important changes. First, it bans gifts and promotional aids for prescription medicines, wherever IFPMA member companies operate. Second, it introduces a shift from a rules-based approach to a values-based Code, which seeks to help better guide business behaviors and interactions between IFPMA members and the healthcare community.

In 1981, the IFPMA Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices was the first international self-regulation mechanism in the biopharmaceutical industry, preceding even the WHO Ethical Criteria on Medicinal Drug Promotion (which was issued in 1988). It was born out of the biopharmaceutical companies' mindfulness that the responsibility of healthcare professionals to their patients must be considered when promoting medicinal products. The Code has been revised five times over recent decades, ensuring that practices in the biopharmaceutical industry are governed by ethical standards in line with society's expectations that result in building more trust with patients and other stakeholders involved in global health progress. Today, expectations regarding compliance are much more comprehensive. With the latest, sixth edition of IFPMA Code of Practice the bar is set higher.

The 2019 Code is marked by two important changes. First, it emphasizes the professional nature of interactions between medical representatives and healthcare professionals and supports high-quality, patient-centered health services and further focuses on the value the biopharmaceutical companies bring to patients, and to society as a whole. Therefore, it establishes a global ban of gifts and promotional aids for prescription medicines, wherever IFPMA member companies operate. This brings the rest of the world in line with current European and US guidance. Any exceptions based on the custom of gifts to mark significant national, cultural or religious events (for example, mooncakes or condolence payments) have also been removed. Second, it introduces a shift from a rules-based to a values-based Code. The IFPMA [Ethos](#) was developed to help instill a culture of ethics and integrity needed to guide business behaviors and interactions between IFPMA members and the healthcare community, no matter how testing the circumstances.

"The very nature of our business requires us to earn and maintain the trust of the people we serve. Our Ethos ensures we have a solid foundation on which to build trust with doctors, nurses, patients, and those who care for patients as well as groups that represent them. We also seek to build trust within the pharmaceutical industry's ecosystem – our staff, scientists, suppliers, etc. Trust is essential to achieving our industry's noble mission of discovering and delivering medicines to patients who need them." said Melissa Barnes, chair of the IFPMA Ethics and Business Integrity Committee, Senior Vice-President for Enterprise and Risk Management and Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer of Eli Lilly & Co.

"Trust is the life-blood of our industry, it is the "north star" for our behaviors. It's not just what pharmaceutical innovation achieves that matters, but also how the industry goes about achieving it. Implementing the new and revised Code in full is about walking the talk, about earning our license to operate", said Thomas Cueni, IFPMA Director General.



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About IFPMA

[IFPMA](#) represents the research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 2 million employees discover, develop, and deliver medicines and vaccines that improve the life of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

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