

How we work with HCOs

The pharmaceutical industry collaborates with healthcare organisations (HCOs) – hospitals and doctors’ surgeries for example, for a variety of reasons, all aimed at improving treatment and care for people.

A large majority of our work with HCOs is related to research and development, where we work with and in hospitals and health care trusts to carry out vital clinical trials that help to develop effective medicines (see factsheet *What is R&D?*).

We also work with HCOs by providing grants and donations that support activities that benefit the organisation, its staff and the people that visit for treatment or family and friends of those receiving treatment.

In addition, we sponsor events with healthcare organisations to support the provision of medical education to healthcare professionals – keeping them up to date about the latest development and delivery of medicines.

In the UK, the pharmaceutical industry also engages with HCOs on Joint Working activities where one or more pharmaceutical companies and the NHS pool skills, experience and/or resources for the joint development and implementation of patient-centred projects.

Grants

There are two main types of grant provided to HCOs. These are educational grants and research grants.

An *educational grant* is funding provided by a pharmaceutical company to a HCO to support independent educational programmes. Examples of activities for which an educational grant might be given include:

- ◆ Funding for an organisation to run independent medical education programmes, allowing doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals to develop their clinical practice and improve outcomes for patients.
- ◆ Funding to an organisation to support an individual healthcare professional’s fellowship and additional medical training.
- ◆ Funding a hospital’s collective subscription to a medical journal.
- ◆ Funding for an HCO to produce a leaflet about a disease.



Research grants can take the form of funding, products, or other support offered by pharmaceutical companies to HCOs for the purpose of the improving or developing medical or scientific knowledge and understanding.

Examples include:

- ◆ Research into how a medicine works in a small group of patients with a specific type of a disease.
- ◆ Research into how patients are diagnosed and treated for a disease.
- ◆ Research into how patients are affected by a disease.

Donations

Companies provide donations to HCOs for improvements and/or equipment and products that benefit everyone.

This type of funding is usually to improve the quality and availability of health care, educate individuals, support those most at risk of health problems or improve knowledge in science medicine and health care.

Examples of donations are:

- ◆ Medical equipment or books.
- ◆ Free products, where permitted, to support disaster relief.
- ◆ Funding to improve waiting areas and/or wards for groups of patients or their families to ensure their treatment experience is as positive as it can be at a difficult time.

Sponsorship of events

Companies specialising in particular therapy areas, diabetes or asthma for example, may provide money directly to a HCO or through a third party event organiser in order to support medical education for doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals.

At these events health professionals have the opportunity to learn about the latest medicines available and keep up to date with treatment options through presentations and engagement with other health professionals



Joint Working

Joint Working is a formal arrangement between the NHS and one or more pharmaceutical companies where all parties make a contribution and the outcomes are measured.

Projects carried out under Joint Working must benefit patients and organisations and individuals must receive the benefit of the project.

Examples of Joint Working projects include:

- ◆ Improving asthma care in partnership with NHS East Surrey CCG by standardising diagnosis and treatment across the CCG's 18 practices.
- ◆ Postal HIV testing in collaboration with Chelsea and Westminster Hospital Foundation Trust in order to ensure better access to services by hard to reach groups, ensuring early treatment which may be life- saving.
- ◆ Personalised acute coronary syndrome patient support programme with Bristol Heart Institute to address individual patient beliefs causing non-adherence to treatment and improve outcomes.

