

Supplementary Online Content

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This supplementary material has been provided by the authors to give readers additional information about their work.

eAppendix 1. Methodology

The Types of Grants Included in the Online Registries

The grants in the manufacturers' online grant registries covered continuing medical education grants, charitable donations, community support, patient education, fellowships, scholarships, awareness and advocacy, and sponsorships. In most cases, the registries did not include patient assistance, matching gifts, political action grants and products or grants made through a corporate foundation. The minimum grant amount included in the registries varied among manufacturers. Nearly all the manufacturers in our database posted details of their transparency policies on their websites.

The Sources of the Data

The data were extracted from web pages and PDF's placed on the website of each manufacturer. The source material were downloaded and cleaned. We combined quarters into a single company file. We then combined the companies into a single database. We then removed all the negative grants, that is, the unused money from previous grants that were returned to the manufacturers.

Category Coding

Our coding process was based on a methodology of rounds. Two coders simultaneously applied their categories to each organization and disagreements were resolved by a third coder. In each round we randomized the members of the groups so that the coders rotated partners.

Name Normalization

We normalized the grant recipient names by

Eliminating splits: We defined a split as when 2 or more requestors occupied a single data cell. An example is American Society of Clinical Oncology the ASCO Cancer Foundation. The resolution was to split the cell so that only one requestor remained in each cell. All other fields remained the same.

Using only one name for each recipient: To do this we eliminated DBA/AKA. An example: Sisters of St. Francis Health Services DBA St. Francis Hospital & Health Services. The resolution was to list only the second name, following the DBA or AKA.

Condensing names and full names rather than acronyms or abbreviations: To do this we condensed and standardized the grant recipients name and eliminated unnecessary information. We also expanded acronyms and abbreviated versions of requested name.

Removing trailing information: To do this we removed all unnecessary trailing information that followed the recipient's name. An example is: Med-IQ, Inc. We removed Inc.

Removing whitespace: When a recipient's name included co joined words we added a white space to separate them.

Removing hyphenation: When a recipient's name lacked the necessary hyphenation that was required to conform to a fully normalized name we added the required hyphenation.

All these coding processes were completed in November 2012.

Generation of a Coded Master List

When the name normalization process was completed, we were able to integrate the results into the full master list. We then discovered approximately 100 name duplications. After we verified them as redundant we culled them from the list. The final step was to filter out all Dual Donor grants and Multiple Recipient grants. In both of these cases, we lacked information about how the money was divided among the recipients. We decided to remove them from the Master List into their own separate sub-sets to maximize the accuracy of the data.

eAppendix 2. Examples of Recipient Organizations in Each Coding Category

Academic Medical Centers (AMC)

Columbia University Medical Center
Feinberg School of Medicine Northwestern University
School of Medicine University of Colorado
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Washington University School of Medicine

Disease Targeted Advocacy Organizations (DTAO)

American Diabetes Association
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Kidney Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation

Hospital Systems and Independent Providers (HISP)

Baptist Health System
Barnabas Health
Danville Regional Medical Center
Lee Memorial Health System
ProMedica

Professional Medical Associations (PMA)

American Academy of Pain Management
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Geriatrics Society
California Academy of Family Physicians
Society for Surgical Oncology

Professional Associations (PA)

American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
American Association for Clinical Chemistry
American Association of Diabetes Educators
Pennsylvania Society for Biomedical Research

Research Organizations (RO)

Albert B. Sabin Vaccine Institute
Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation
American Association of Cancer Research
Brain Research Foundation
Cardiovascular Research Foundation

Since not all recipients of pharmaceutical company grants were directly involved in healthcare, we created an "Other" Category. The category included community and faith based organizations, and political and political action organizations:

Examples of organizations in this category include:

The United States Chamber of Congress
Council of State Governments
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
American Muslims of Morgantown
Great Valley School District

eAppendix 3. Coding Criteria

Medical Communications Companies (MCCs)

MCC is the coding category when the primary mission of the recipient is:

- disseminating information on disease states, prevention, management, therapies, drugs or medical devices to health care professionals and/or the public.

MCC is the coding category when the recipient is a:

- for-profit organization
- part of a larger communications company
- owned by a holding company
- nonprofit organization
- not a subsidiary of other recipient organizations (such as AMCs)

MCC is the coding category when the recipient is:

- providing consulting services, advice on branding or recruiting patients for clinical trials
- arranging international conferences for health care professionals

An MCC may:

- provide CME
- be accredited by the ACCME or other CE accreditation entities
- joint sponsor CME with AMCs and PMAs