**Arthritis Care**

**Policy: Working with companies**

**Introduction**

The purpose of Arthritis Care is to empower people with arthritis through support and information, ensuring their voices are heard and their conditions more effectively managed.

We do this through the delivery of five key impact goals:

- To increase the number of people with arthritis who are able to manage their pain on a daily basis
- To improve the health and wellbeing of people with arthritis and ensure more have the confidence to manage their condition
- To reduce the physical and emotional isolation felt by many people living with arthritis
- To ensure more people with arthritis can live an independent life, receiving the support they are entitled to
- To improve services and ensure the voice of people living with arthritis is heard and acted on

And five infrastructure goals:

- To diversify our fundraising activities creating a balanced portfolio of support for the work of Arthritis Care
- To develop and implement a joined up marketing and communications programme, driving forward all of arthritis care’s impact goals and business objectives
- To create a staff and volunteer base that has the capacity, skills and support to deliver our impact goals
- To have fit for purpose governance at the local and national level
- To become an evidence-based organisation adopting a consistent approach to impact measurement, quality and evaluation

This policy aims to ensure that any relationship that Arthritis Care develops with a corporation (profit making organisations):

- puts the best interests of people with arthritis at the heart of the partnership and
- proactively supports the delivery of Arthritis Care’s goals (see above)

This policy will come into force when Arthritis Care chooses to work in partnership (ie relationships of mutual benefit) with a profit making organisation.

**Context**

At the time of writing arthritis affects approximately 10 million people across the UK across 200 different types of arthritis. The number of those affected by osteoarthritis is set to soar over the next 15 years from 8.5m to 17m by 2030, as the population gets older, more overweight and becomes less active. Arthritis Care will lead the way in ensuring that those affected get the care and support they need and will work in partnership to have maximum impact.

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1 A national consultation with people living with arthritis informed these organisational goals
Guiding principles

Arthritis Care will

- always represent the best interests of people affected by arthritis
- only work with corporations where there is a clear benefit to people affected by arthritis
- only work with corporations who are able and willing to proactively support the delivery of Arthritis Care’s strategic objectives and goals (see above)
- assess all partnerships on an individual basis and ensure that a written agreement is drawn up at the beginning of each new partnership which identifies the benefits to both parties
- ensure that the outcomes of the partnership and any associated projects are formally defined and monitored
- only work with corporations that are willing and able to identify and credit the Arthritis Care brand as appropriate
- consider opportunities to work with any corporation and will not restrict on the basis of the number of partners that we work with (avoidance criteria excepted – see below)
- aim to ensure that the partnership is based on equality and mutual benefit
- be open and transparent; publicising corporate relationships via our website and our annual report and accounts including gifts in kind, sponsorship and voluntary income
- not develop or continue any collaboration that may damage the reputation of Arthritis Care (to the best of its knowledge at the time)
- be open and transparent in response to any public or media enquiry regarding our partnerships
- not share personal details of any of our clients, supporters or other stakeholders without their prior written permission
- ensure that any communication regarding the partnership or associated projects will be agreed by common accord prior to dissemination
- retain copyright of its own products
- ensure that partners gain prior written permission before the charity’s logo or materials are used
- declare and document any conflicts of interest of members of the Board or Senior Management Team in the Arthritis Care ‘Register of Interests’
- ensure that any market research that is commissioned by Arthritis Care is not unduly influenced
- ensure that the high quality information materials produced by Arthritis Care are not influenced in anyway by the acceptance of sponsorship from corporations. All information is and will be based on the latest evidence available, informed by healthcare professionals and people with arthritis to meet the Information Standard criteria.
- only accept funding that supports the goals of Arthritis Care and whereby as a minimum, all costs are covered including the indirect costs such as management time
- Arthritis Care will accept funding from corporations when it believes
  I. Funding will benefit people affected by arthritis and/or further the goals of Arthritis Care
  II. No damage to reputation will occur from accepting such support (to the best of its knowledge at the time)
  III. The funding does not try to coerce or unduly influence Arthritis Care’s policy either explicitly or implicitly
Working with pharma and medical device agencies
When appropriate, Arthritis Care may campaign and influence for improved/equitable access to drugs, treatments and/or devices where we determine that this is in the interests of people living with arthritis. Arthritis Care may also wish to campaign for access to drugs and treatments at an affordable price. Arthritis Care will draw upon a range of sources of evidence to inform our public policy stances and campaigning activities. However Arthritis Care will not accept financial support from a pharmaceutical or medical device company that we believe seeks to determine the content of our public policy positions in any way. No funder or donor will be allowed to exert editorial influence or control over the content of any Arthritis Care document setting out our views on public policy matters, such as the provision of health services or access to drugs.

Our public policy positions are determined by trustees and senior management and our partnerships and funding relationships will not be allowed to prejudice these decisions.

The pharmaceutical industry is bound by the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) Code of Practice, a self-regulatory system that is underpinned by the law. Arthritis Care will also comply with this Code of Practice according to clause 24 of the Code, ‘Relationships with Patient Organisations’


The ABPI in collaboration with the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) and National Voices (of which Arthritis Care is a member) are developing complementary guides to help both sectors understand how best to work with each other. This guide will outline a set of principles that should guide interactions between the pharmaceutical industry, health charities and patient groups, as well as identifying practical considerations for partnerships. Arthritis Care is proactively engaged in this process and hopes that this will result in clearer guidance for effective partnership working and once published (early 2015), will use it to support the management of its partnerships.

The medical technology sector is bound by the Association of British Healthcare Industries (ABHI) Code of Practice, another self-regulatory system that is underpinned by law. Arthritis Care will also comply with this Code of Practice, in particular the section ‘Donations to Charities and Philanthropic Purposes’.

Arthritis Care will enter into strategic partnerships with individual corporations if it is deemed to be in the best interest of people affected by arthritis and meets the conditions set out in this policy. But where possible we favour the use of a funding consortia based on two or more corporations working together.

Avoidance criteria
Arthritis Care will not work in partnership with (or accept financial support from) corporations involved with any of following activities
- The manufacture of tobacco