HELSE NORD
HELSE MIDT-NORGE
HELSE SØR-ØST
HELSE VEST

LFH Leverandører for helse-Norge -en foretrukken partner

LMI LEGEMIDDELINDUSTRIEN Medisinske fremskritt for bedre helse

Clear rules for interaction

The regional health authorities have entered into agreements concerning the nature of their dealings with the Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry in Norway (LMI) and the Norwegian Association of Medical Suppliers (LFH). The agreements ensure that interaction takes place in a professionally and ethically correct manner.

With a mandate from the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services, the South-East Regional Health Authority has negotiated an agreement with LFH, the industry association for suppliers of medical devices, on behalf of all the four regional health authorities. The agreement, which enters into force on 1 January 2011, is based on a similar agreement entered into between the regional health authorities and LMI in 2006. The agreements cover all cooperation between the four regional health authorities, suppliers of medical equipment and the pharmaceutical industry.

The primary purpose of the agreements is to ensure that all interaction between health enterprise employees, suppliers to the health sector generally and the pharmaceutical industry in particular, and other health sector suppliers proceeds in a professionally and ethically correct manner. The objectives of sound professional development, proper evaluation of medical methods and correct use of equipment, consumables and drugs shall be at the fore.

Collaboration between health personnel and the two industries' suppliers is a prerequisite for ensuring correct use and treatment and the development of new and improved drugs, medical consumables and technical medical equipment. The parties also wish these agreements to pave the way for cooperation on research as a means to improved treatment of patients.

All cooperation between the parties shall be planned and organised in such a way that neither the patient nor the community can cast doubt on the independence, integrity or medical evaluations of the health enterprises or their employees. This makes particular demands of transparency and the possibility of monitoring both existing agreements and new forms of collaboration. The cooperation shall be characterised by orderliness, openness and transparency.

Who is responsible for ensuring adherence to the agreement?
All employees and managers of both the health enterprises and the suppliers have an independent responsibility to ensure that the agreement is respected. It is a managerial responsibility to ensure that all employees are aware of and adhere to the agreement. The individual employee has a responsibility to familiarise himself or herself with and adhere to the agreements.

Meetings • courses • congresses

Are there rules for meetings on the health enterprises' premises?
All meetings shall be agreed in advance in accordance with the enterprise's authorisation regime. The enterprises are responsible for ensuring that that a list of those authorised to approve meeting agreements is available to the suppliers. Unannounced visits to health enterprises shall not take place.

Who receives invitations?
All invitations to courses and congresses shall go to the health enterprise. Attendance shall be approved by the managing director or the person to whom this authority has been delegated. The health enterprise employee in question is personally responsible for obtaining approval. The invitation must always contain information as to who is arranging and who is paying for an activity.

Who pays travel expenses?
The general rule is that travel and accommodation expenses are covered by the health enterprise. In exceptional cases, where travel expenses are covered by others, the health enterprise must give its approval. However, this does not apply to shared transport for short distances.

Who can contribute when the health enterprise arranges an event?
Suppliers to health enterprises shall not contribute financially to the arrangement of courses, congresses, professional meetings etc. that take place under the auspices of the health enterprises themselves.

What are the rules applying to lectures?
Health personnel may hold lectures for suppliers, but the assignment and the conditions shall be approved by the managing director or the person to whom this responsibility has been delegated.

What are the rules applying to fees?
Fees to employees for assignments such as holding positions on advisory boards, giving lectures, consulting activity etc. shall be approved by the health enterprise.

procurement • gifts • research • service/training • testing

Procurement
What are the rules applying to procurement?
- Act no. 69 of 16 July 1999 relating to government procurement and regulation no. 402 of 14 July 2006
- Circular no. 1-13/2005 "The Gift Regulations" from the Ministry of Health and Care Services
- The ethical guidelines of the health enterprises

Gifts
Health personnel may not accept gifts or other benefits that may influence, or are likely to influence them in an inappropriate manner in the performance of their work. In practice, this means a general prohibition. However, gifts or benefits of insignificant value are exempt from this rule. See also the ethical guidelines of the health enterprises themselves.

Research
All collaboration on research and development work shall receive the advance approval of the managing director or person to whom responsibility has been delegated, and there shall be written agreements. All external financing of research shall moreover be channelled to the health trust and not to the individual employee.

Service and training
The right of equipment suppliers' to provide service and training (applies to the agreement with LFH)
Service information and training in day-to-day operations and the handling of medical equipment, and service of medical equipment and materials shall take place either at the request of the health trust or in accordance with the terms of the contract.

Testing
Testing of equipment and product testing (concerns the agreement with LFH)
All testing of medical equipment shall be approved in writing by the health trust, and shall take place in compliance with the parties' ethical rules.

Background information

What forms of collaboration require written approval?
- All procurement and other dealings that entail financial transactions
- Joint research projects
- Invitations to courses, professional meetings and congresses
- Agreements on training of patients and patients' family
- All other planned cooperative ventures

This list is not necessarily exhaustive. If you are in doubt, you should normally choose a written agreement.

Where is more information on the agreements to be found?
An information package has been prepared for employees of the health enterprises and from the Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry in Norway (LMI) and suppliers to Norwegian health institutions (LFH).

This package contains:
- The texts of the agreements
- A PowerPoint presentation for use by managers
- An e-training course on application of the agreement
- A brochure on the main points in the agreement (guidelines)

Who should be contacted for more information about the agreements?
- South-East Regional Health Authority, tel. 02411, postmottak@helse-sorost.no
- Western Norway Regional Health Authority, tel. 51 96 38 00, postmottak@helse-vest.no
- Central Norway Regional Health Authority, tel. 74 83 99 00, postmottak@helse-midt.no
- Northern Norway Regional Health Authority, tel. 75 51 29 00, postmottak@helse-nord.no
- The Norwegian Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, tel.: 23 16 89 20, lmi@lmi.no
- The Norwegian Association of Medical Suppliers, tel. 23 16 89 20, lfh@lfh.no

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