

## Board of Scientific Advisers

### Declaration of Interests by Members of BOSA

#### Background

In view of rising public expectation that members of all statutory/advisory boards and committees should, and be seen to, deliver impartial decision/advice free of conflict of interests, the Administration has proposed that all boards and committees should consider to adopt a certain system for declaration of interests.

#### Proposal

2. Taking into account the role of the BOSA in the formulation of public health management and the effect of its decision on the general public, it is proposed that the following guidelines on the declaration of interests be adopted –

- (a) If a member has any direct personal or pecuniary interest in any matter under consideration by the Board, he should, as soon as practicable after he has become aware of it, disclose it to the Chairman and/or the Secretary prior to the discussion of the item. Declaration may be made verbally during a Committee meeting or in writing before the meeting.
- (b) Some situations of potential conflict of interest, which warrant action as set out at (a) above, are –
  - (i) pecuniary interests in a matter under consideration by the Board, held either by the member or any close relative or



close friend of his;

- (ii) directorship, partnership, advisory or client relationship, employment or other significant connection with a company, firm, club, association, union or other organization which is connected with, or the subject of, a matter under consideration by the Board;
  - (iii) a member who, as a professional adviser, having personally or as a member of a company, advised or represented or had frequent dealings with any person or body connected with a matter under consideration by the Board; or
  - (iv) any interest likely to lead an objective observer to believe that the member's advice might have been motivated by personal interest rather than a duty to give impartial advice/decision.
- (c) The Board shall decide whether a member disclosing an interest may speak or vote on the matter, may remain in the meeting as an observer, or should withdraw from the meeting.
- (d) If the Chairman declares an interest in a matter under consideration, the chairmanship may be temporarily taken over by a Member to be elected as Chairman for that particular case/discussion item.
- (e) When a known direct pecuniary interest exists, the Secretary may withhold circulation of relevant papers to the member concerned. Where a member is in receipt of a paper for discussion which he knows presents a direct conflict of interest, or which he believes would give rise to conflict of interest, he should immediately inform the Secretary and return the paper.
- (f) All cases of declaration of interests shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.

### **Advice Sought**

3. Members are invited to note the proposed guidelines set out in paragraph 2 above and indicate agreement to adopt such guidelines in relation

to the work of the BOSA.

Centre for Health Protection  
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