



Article

Working with the Pharmaceutical Industry

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The purpose of this page is to set down and make clear the position of the Trustees and the Management of the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS) in regard to any working relationships with the pharmaceutical industry.

The aim of NRAS is to work to achieve a better life for people living with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) and JIA Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis. NRAS recognises that working with pharmaceutical companies which manufacture drugs to treat these diseases can help us to achieve this aim.

It can be helpful to work with the pharmaceutical companies which manufacture and market medicines for Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) and/or Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA). These partnerships give NRAS important and necessary background information and provide us with further opportunities to raise awareness of these conditions and the need to improve the quality of care for people RA and people living with JIA, including access to services and medicines.

As a charity, NRAS has to raise funds on a continual basis in order to exist and execute our charitable functions and we therefore receive funding from a variety of sources, which includes pharmaceutical companies. This can be in the form of sponsorship or educational grants or funding for particular activities undertaken by NRAS.

NRAS receives funding from pharmaceutical companies in two ways: for specific projects, and as core funding (corporate membership) to help provide support for all those who live with RA and JIA. In either case, NRAS will exercise its independent judgement over whether to accept or decline an offer of funding.

NRAS also contributes to advisory boards, pharmaceutical staff training and providing expert consultation services all of which are charged at the going market rate in recognition of our expertise in the field of RA and JIA.

Public concern about commercial interests influencing voluntary organisations in a negative way have to be taken seriously and therefore a code of practice which makes any such relationships clear and transparent is necessary.

NRAS has always worked to the highest ethical standards and wishes its financial funding arrangements with the pharmaceutical industry to be clearly defined, recorded and transparent.

NRAS views its relationships with the pharmaceutical industry as a two-way process. We view

positively opportunities for NRAS to raise awareness of RA and JIA amongst pharmaceutical industry staff and projects where our expertise and knowledge may be harnessed to improve patient information and education materials and services being produced by industry, to the ultimate benefit of people living with RA and JIA.

Independence

NRAS is a totally independent organisation and no relationship will be entered into which could in any way jeopardise or compromise that independence.

It is standard policy not to promote, endorse or approve any particular product, service or brand whether this comes from the pharmaceutical industry or any other commercial industry sector.

NRAS will only ever undertake projects which could benefit those affected by RA or JIA, directly or indirectly, or add value to the information, education and support it provides to those affected by these diseases.

NRAS will reject funding or sponsorship or any relationship which might be perceived to damage its reputation, independence or charitable status.

When collaborating on 'content' whether it is a written communication, publication or digital information for web or social media, complete editorial control will remain with NRAS.

NRAS will not allow the good name it has built up to be compromised in any way.

NRAS will maintain good working relationships with the pharmaceutical industry which benefit and are in the best interests of those affected by RA and/or JIA.

Trustees, officers, staff and anyone operating on behalf of NRAS will be expected to adhere to the policy and NRAS will make this policy available to any organisations it works with on joint projects to inform and guide these relationships.

Transparency

Where NRAS elects to work with a pharmaceutical company in relation to a specific project, the charity will acknowledge this publicly through openly declaring commercial sponsorship of a project where relevant in any media or PR work.

NRAS will also carry the sponsor's logo on all written communications associated with that project.

NRAS will publish a summary of its financial contributions from pharmaceutical companies in its annual report in line with Charity Commission accounting procedures.

NRAS will only work with a pharmaceutical company where it can ensure compliance with the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry. Where a company is not a member we will require written assurances of compliance with these principles.

NRAS will ensure that no project sponsor has an undue influence over the charity in relation to the objectives or outcomes of any project.

Funding

Wherever possible NRAS funding requests are sought from a number of companies and NRAS will negotiate with all its sponsors on an equal basis to ensure no individual company is treated differently from any other in regard to funding of any particular project.

We will ensure that total income from pharmaceutical funded projects will not exceed 25% of our total income and does not exceed 10% from any one company in one year.

Funding can be directly paid to NRAS to cover the cost of a particular project, contribute to core costs, or be paid as an educational grant. Services provided in kind to the charity at a cost to the pharmaceutical company can also be provided where no direct funding is received by NRAS. Whilst we cannot influence the exact value ascribed to such activities by a pharmaceutical company we would expect it to be a fair and an accurate reflection of the cost of such work but this does not automatically mean that NRAS ascribe the same 'value'. Where NRAS staff are asked to speak or attend a particular meeting or advisory board and receive an honorarium for doing so, all such honoraria are passed back to NRAS and no member of NRAS staff will benefit personally. Any such honoraria or reimbursement of travel expenses are excluded from the total project funding in any one calendar year.

NRAS would like to thank the following companies for supporting the work of NRAS during 2023 and acknowledge financial payment of any consultancy work provided by NRAS to the work undertaken by industry partners.

Company Name	Project Name/Reason for Funding	Month	Amount	Beneficiary	Total 2023 Funding (ex VAT)
AbbVie Ltd	NRAS attendance at Advisory Board Meeting	Feb	£560	AbbVie	
	Core Funding	Jul	£10,000	NRAS	
	NRAS attendance at Advisory Board Meeting	Dec	£510	AbbVie	
					£11,070

Biogen Idec Limited	Publication Funding for print and distribution of 'I Want to Work'	Sep	£10,000	NRAS	
	Corporate Membership	Sep	£12,000	NRAS	£22,000
Eli Lilly and Company Limited	NRAS CEO presentation at nurse training event	Nov	£990	Eli Lilly	£990
Fresenius Kabi Limited	Pro-bono training (5 x remote sessions delivered to NRAS staff at a total of 9 hours – not invoiced)	N/A	N/A	NRAS	
	Corporate Membership	Dec	£12,000	NRAS	£12,000
Galapagos Biotech Limited	Sponsorship to cover some costs of attending BSR conference	Mar	£2,000	NRAS	
	People's Priority Magazine insert in NRAS NewsRheum Magazine	Mar	£500	Co-beneficiaries	
	Corporate Membership	Apr	£12,000	NRAS	£14,500
Inmedix Inc.	NRAS Stress Matters project	Jun	£11,317.33	NRAS	£11,317.33
Medac Pharma LLP	Sponsorship to cover some costs of attending BSR conference	Feb	£2,000	NRAS	
	Selfie Frame for BSR conference	May	£538	NRAS	
	NRAS support on Injectable Project Focus Groups	Nov	£3,495	Medac	
	Reprint of 2,000 Blood Matters booklets	Apr	£2,285	NRAS	

					£8,318
Pfizer Limited	Patient recruitment for project	Feb	£162	Pfizer	£162
Sandoz Limited	NRAS attendance at Patient Advocacy Group Event	Sep	£487.50	Sandoz	
	Publication Funding for print and distribution of 'Employers' Guide to RA'	Nov	£10,000	NRAS	
					£10,487.50
UCB Pharma Ltd	Corporate Membership	Jun	£12,000	NRAS	£12,000

Total funding received from the pharmaceutical industry in 2023: £102,844.83

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