

# **Guidelines for Conflicts of Interest (COI) in Execution of Operations by the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine**

## **Outline**

The Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine was founded in 1949, and its aim is to promote progress and development of research relating to medical science for physical fitness and sports, cooperate with the spread of this research into the wider world and also contribute to society through application of research results. There are currently around 5,000 members, making it Japan's largest academic society in the field of physical fitness and sports medicine under The Japanese Association of Medical Sciences. Its operational activities include organization of science lectures, etc., publication of two bulletins (Tairyoku Kagaku: The Japanese Journal of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, and The Journal of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, hereinafter abbreviated as “JPFSM”) and registers of names, participation/cooperation with businesses that affiliate themselves with international academic meetings associated with the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, promoting, spreading and publicizing physical fitness and sports medicine, and operations necessary for achieving other purposes.

Research results published in periodicals and science lectures organized by the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine include many countless results from physical fitness and sports medicine research, the promotion of which is based largely on cooperative activities between industry and the academic world. Appropriately returning results from physical fitness research to society is extremely important for the health of the nation as well as maintaining and improving physical fitness, and at the same time is of great significance in relation to extending healthy life spans.

In Japan, cooperative activities between industry and the academic world have been fitnessed as part of state policy, following on from the enactment in 1995 of the Science and Technology Basic Act with the aim of creating a nation based on science and technology, and the establishment in 1996 of a “Science and Technology Basic Plan”. Since cooperation between industry and the academic world involves cooperative activities between organizations with different objectives and roles – namely, official universities and research organizations “conducting research and higher education in pursuit of truth”, and corporations “aiming to make money” - there are inevitable and unavoidable conflicts between personal gain and responsibility of staff involved with corporations, etc. and the responsibilities of academic societies when conducting cooperative activities. Such conditions are explained as “conflicts of interest” (COI). Appropriate management of conflict of interest by academic societies and associations on an organizational level is becoming an important issue. Physical fitness research requires participation by healthy ordinary people as objects/test subjects, and research conducted with cooperation from objects/test subjects adhering to ethical regulations must genuinely contribute to society at large.

In recent years, many academic societies have decided on their own guidelines for research-related conflict of interest in order to maintain fairness and impartiality in their research, transparency in academic publications and social credibility while appropriately promoting research by means of cooperation between industry and the academic world. In order to return legitimate research results to society and to fulfill its accountability to society by means of appropriate COI management, the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine has decided on Conflict of Interest Guidelines to be shared throughout the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine. This is to ensure that as a fixed requirement its members, etc., disclose in publications of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, etc., any economic connections to corporations or corporate organizations where there are conflicts of interest.

## **I. Purpose**

Ethical principles for medical science research with human subjects are stated in documents such as the “Declaration of Helsinki”, the “Ethical Guidelines for Clinical Research (Ministry of Health, Labour and Wel-

fare Bulletin No. 255, Revision of FY 2008)” and “ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EPIDEMIOLOGICAL RESEARCH (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Revision of FY 2008)”. Exceptional consideration is required with regards to test subjects' human rights, protection of life, and safety.

In view of the social responsibility and high level of ethics required throughout its activities, the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine has established “Guidelines for Conflict of Interest (COI) in Execution of Operations by the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine” (hereinafter abbreviated as “these Guidelines”). The purpose of these Guidelines is for the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine to fulfill its social duties through appropriate management of members' conflicts of interest, etc., while maintaining neutrality and fairness in activities such as publishing, spreading and publicizing research results. These Guidelines indicate basic views on conflicts of interest relating to members, etc. and demand that members, etc. of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine appropriately disclose by means of personal statements any personal conflicts of interest when participating in all kinds of operations and publications, as well as requesting adherence to these Guidelines.

## **II. Subjects**

These Guidelines shall be applied to the following subjects where there is a possibility of conflict of interest.

- (1) Members of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (2) Persons creating publications at the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (3) Officials of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine (Chairman of the Board, Directors, Auditors), parties responsible for science lectures (Chairman, etc.), Chairpersons of all kinds of committees, members of special committees (Science Meeting Management Committee, Academic Journal Editorial Committee, Ethics and Medical Care Safety Committee, Conflict of Interest Committee, etc.), and members of temporary working groups (subcommittees, working groups, etc.)
- (4) Spouses, relatives such as first-degree kin and parties sharing income/assets with subjects listed in (1) to (3) above
- (5) Persons contributing articles to “Tairyoku Kagaku: JJPFSM”
- (6) Persons contributing articles to “JPFSM”

## **III. Activities covered**

These Guidelines shall apply to all operational activities conducted by the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine:

- (1) Holding science lectures, etc.
- (2) Publication of two bulletins (Tairyoku Kagaku and JPFSM) and registers of names
- (3) Participation/cooperation with businesses affiliating themselves with international academic meetings associated with the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (4) Promoting, spreading and publicizing physical fitness medicine
- (5) Operations necessary for achievement of other purposes

## **IV. Establishment of Conflict of Interest Committee**

A Conflict of Interest Committee shall be established in order to conduct appropriate management of conflicts of interest involving parties subject to these Guidelines, as well as to deal with violators. The Conflict of Interest Committee shall act in accordance with items set forth in these Guidelines and regulations.  
Committee.

## **V. Matters to be disclosed/made open to the public**

In case a party subject to these Guidelines personally exceeds the standards established in regulations for the

following items (1) to (8), he/she shall submit a statement of the exact circumstances to the Board Chairman of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine. This shall also apply to individuals who are accepted as representative researchers of organizations. Specific methods of disclosing/making open to the public the contents of statements shall be set forth in separate regulations.

- (1) Employment as official/consultant of corporations/corporate organizations, or organizations whose purpose is to make money
- (2) Ownership of shares
- (3) Patent rights usage fees received from corporations/corporate organizations, or organizations whose purpose is to make money
- (4) Daily allowance (lecture fees, etc.) paid for time/labor of researchers secured for attendance at meetings (publication) from corporations/corporate organizations, or organizations whose purpose is to make money
- (5) Payment for manuscripts for writing of pamphlets, etc. paid by corporations/corporate organizations, or organizations whose purpose is to make money
- (6) Research funds (research commissions, collaborative research, donations, etc.) provided by corporations/corporate organizations, or organizations whose purpose is to make money
- (7) Donation courses in which the sponsor is a corporation/corporate organization, or organization whose purpose is to make money
- (8) Other remuneration (travel, gifts, etc. not directly related to research)

## **VI. Avoiding conflicts of interest**

### 1. Matters to be avoided by all parties subject to these Guidelines

Official announcements of results from physical fitness research and establishment of guidelines, etc. are to be carried out based on purely scientific bases and by decisions for the common good. When producing officially announced content comprising physical fitness and sports medicine research results and explanations thereof, or physical fitness and sports medicine research guidelines/manuals based on science, members of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine must not be influenced by the selfish motives of providers of funds for physical fitness research or corporations. Furthermore, contracts must be executed in order to prevent any influence from providers of funds or corporations, etc.

### 2. Matters to be avoided by parties responsible for research

General responsible parties with the right to decide on planning/implementation of physical fitness and sports medicine research are to be elected from among parties not having serious conflicts of interest relating to the following items, and must likewise remain free of such conflicts of interest after election.

- (1) Ownership of shares in corporation requesting research
- (2) Acquisition of patent fees/patent rights for products/technologies obtained from research results
- (3) Officials, directors and consultants, etc. of corporation requesting research or organization whose purpose is to make money (excluding scientific consultants who are not compensated)

In cases where items (1) to (3) apply to an individual but that individual is an essential member of personnel for the planning/implementation of the research, and the research in question is of extremely important international significance, the Conflict of Interest Committee shall deliberate and if approval can be obtained from the Board of Directors, it shall be possible for the individual to be inaugurated as a party responsible for this research. In this case, the Conflict of Interest Committee shall inspect the physical fitness research after its implementation in order to verify that it has been conducted in an appropriate manner.

## **VII. Method of implementation**

### 1. Duties of members

In case a member publishes research results at a science lecture, etc., the member shall be obligated to give appropriate disclosure of any conflict of interest relating to implementation of the research. Disclosure shall

be made using the prescribed format in accordance with regulations. If it is identified that these Guidelines have been violated in relation to the publication of research, etc., the Conflict of Interest Committee shall deliberate and report to the Board of Directors.

## 2. Duties of officials, etc.

The Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine officials (Chairman of the Board, Directors, Auditors), Convention Chairpersons, and Chairpersons of all kinds of committees bear important roles and duties in all operational activities involving the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, and shall be obligated at the time of inauguration to make a personal statement in accordance with the prescribed format detailing any conflict of interest relating to these operations. In case new conflicts of interest arise after inauguration, a revised statement shall be issued in accordance with regulations.

## 3. Role of Conflict of Interest Committee

In all operations conducted by the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, in cases where there have been serious conflicts of interest with members or where suspicions have been identified regarding the propriety of personal statements of conflicts of interest, the Conflict of Interest Committee shall confirm and manage members' conflicts of interest by conducting surveys including interviews and report details to the Board Chairman.

## 4. Role of Board of Directors

When, in the execution by officials, etc. of operations for the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, cases arise where there have been serious conflicts of interest or where personal statements of conflicts of interest have been identified as inappropriate, the Board of Directors shall submit inquiries to the Conflict of Interest Committee and shall be able to direct measures for improvement, etc. based on the Committee's reply.

## 5. Role of Convention Chairpersons

Convention Chairpersons shall verify that results published at academic meetings are implemented in line with these Guidelines, and shall be able to take measures such as prohibiting addresses that violate these Guidelines. In such cases, the reasons for prohibition shall promptly be explained to the party intending to publish the violating content. When taking these measures, the Convention Chairpersons shall submit inquiries to the Conflict of Interest Committee and shall be able to direct measures for improvement, etc. based on the Committee's reply.

## 6. Role of Editorial Committee

The Editorial Committee shall verify research results published in periodicals such as the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine bulletin in order to confirm that these are implemented in line with these Guidelines, and in case of violation of these Guidelines (including violation by contributors other than members) the Editorial Committee shall be able to take measures such as prohibiting publication. In such cases, notification shall promptly be issued to the contributor of the article in question. In case an article violating these Guidelines has been identified after publication, it shall be possible to make this known to the periodical, etc. using the name of the Editorial Committee Chairman. When taking these measures, the Editorial Committee Chairman shall submit inquiries to the Conflict of Interest Committee and shall be able to direct measures for improvement, etc. based on the Committee's reply.

## 7. Role of other committee chairpersons/members

Other committee chairpersons/members shall verify their respective academic meeting operations in order to confirm that these are implemented in line with these Guidelines, and in case of violation of these Guidelines consideration shall promptly be given to plans for improvement of the situation. When taking these measures, inquiries shall be submitted to the Conflict of Interest Committee, and the Board of Directors shall be able to direct measures for improvement, etc. based on the Committee's reply.

## **VIII. Measures to be taken against parties violating these Guidelines, and accountability**

### **1. Measures to be taken against parties violating these Guidelines**

Based on separately established regulations, the Board of Directors of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine has the authority to deliberate on acts that are in violation of these Guidelines, and in case the Board of Directors has determined that there was a serious violation of these Guidelines as a result of deliberation after submitting an inquiry to the Ethics Committee and obtaining a reply from said Committee, the Board of Directors shall be able to take all or part of the following measures over a fixed period depending on the extent of the violation.

- (1) Prohibition of publication in all science lectures held by the Japan Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (2) Prohibition of publishing articles in periodicals of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (3) Prohibition of inauguration as Chairman of science lectures for the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (4) Prohibition of participation in the Board of Directors, committees or working groups of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (5) Dismissal of conference member or prohibition of inauguration as conference member of the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine
- (6) Suspension of qualifications, expulsion, or prohibition of admission to the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine members

### **2. Right to appeal**

Parties subjected to directions for improvement or prohibition measures from the above-mentioned implementation method items 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 shall be able to appeal against the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine. In case this is accepted by the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine, it shall promptly repeat deliberation in the Conflict of Interest Committee, have the matter discussed by the Board of Directors, and then inform the appealing party of the results.

### **3. Accountability**

In case the Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine has decided that results of physical fitness and sports medicine research published with its own participation are in serious violation of these Guidelines, it must immediately have the matter discussed by the Board of Directors and fulfill its accountability to society.

## **IX. Enactment of regulations**

The Japanese Society of Physical Fitness and Sports Medicine shall be able to enact regulations necessary for the operation of these Guidelines.

## **X. Amendments**

It is anticipated that these Guidelines may require partial modification due to individual cases based on factors such as social effects and laws relating to cooperation between industry and the academic world. These Guidelines shall be periodically reviewed and it shall be possible to make amendments.

## **XI. Date of enforcement**

These Guidelines shall be enforced as of July 19, 2013.