

Conflicts of Interest



What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest is a situation where a conflict arises between your official duties and your private or personal interests that could influence or could be perceived to influence, your ability to perform your official duties.

A conflict of interest may involve avoiding a personal loss as well as gaining a personal advantage.

Actual, perceived or potential?

An **actual** conflict of interest is a direct conflict between your work duties and private interests.

A **perceived** or **apparent** conflict exists if it could be believed, or appears, that your private interests could improperly influence you when performing your duties – whether or not this in fact the case.

A **potential** conflict of interest is where you have private interests that could conflict with other official duties in the future.

It doesn't matter what type of conflict of interest exists, they all need to be dealt with as they can affect the integrity of South Eastern Sydney Local Health District.

Interests could be:

Pecuniary interests – the loss or gain to you or someone associated is financial.

Non-pecuniary interests – the loss or gain for you or someone associated with you that is non financial.

Personal or private interests – include professional or business interests that you have but can also include interests of individuals such as family and friends or groups you associate with such as sporting or social clubs.

Your responsibilities

It is your responsibility to identify, disclose and manage conflicts of interest. It is in your interest to do so to prevent actual or perceived conflicts from occurring and to be open and honest in all activities where personal interests may clash with work requirements.

You must disclose a conflict of interest, preferably in writing to your immediate supervisor and/or senior manager at the first available opportunity. An on-line [Conflicts of Interest Declaration Form](#) should be completed and submitted for review and consideration of your manager.

If you are aware that another staff member has a potential conflict of interest, that has not been disclosed, you have an obligation to report the matter to your immediate supervisor and/or senior management.

Do I have a conflict of interest?

The following questions might help you to decide if you have a conflict of interest or not:

- Do I, a relative, friend or associate stand
 - to gain or lose financially or in any other way from SESLHD's decision or action?
 - Am I in a position to influence the outcome
 - of an action or decision?
 - Have I made any promises or
 - commitments in relation to the matter?
 - Have I received a benefit from someone
 - that stands to lose or gain from SESLHD's decision/action?
 - Do I have secondary employment?
 - Am I a member of an association, club or
 - professional organisation that stand to lose or gain from SESLHD's consideration of the matter?

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Do I have a conflict of interest?

- Could there be benefits for me in the future that could cast doubt on my objectivity?
Am I confident of my ability to act impartially and in the public interest?

You can also complete the [Conflicts of Interest Questionnaire](#) to assist with determining whether you need to declare a conflict of interest.

Examples of possible conflicts of interest

- Sitting as a member on a selection panel where applicants for the position are known to the member personally, as either family, friend or close associate.
- Being privately employed in a second job where the second position could affect the performance of the duties in SESLHD or give the impression that favouritism was being given to the private employer.
- Providing information or making recommendations to patients regarding service providers where one of the service providers is a close friend, relative or business associate.
- Establishing a relationship with a pharmaceutical company or medical equipment supplier where it could be perceived that preference was given to the particular company during procurement/tendering process.
- Accepting payment of fees and/or honorariums for sitting on committees.
- Having directorships and share holdings in private companies, associations, etc which deal with the health organisation.

Conflict of Interest Register

In compliance with Ministry of Health policy, Local Health Districts are required to maintain a Conflict of Interest Register that records details of conflicts of interest and how they have been managed. A Conflict of Interest Register is maintained by Internal Audit and all conflicts of interest are required to have an on-line [Conflicts of Interest Declaration Form](#) completed. This form will be reviewed and assessed by the approving manager who will approve/reject and provide comments on management of the conflict.

Further advice

Refer to the [Internal Audit Intranet Conflicts of Interest page](#) for further advice, resources and contacts.



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