

## TO: SRNT MEMBERS

**From:** John Hughes [john.hughes@uvm.edu](mailto:john.hughes@uvm.edu)

**Subject:** policy statements on tobacco funding and the WHO tobacco treaty talks

Dear colleagues,

FYI, below are two policy statements approved by the SRNT Policy committee and the SRNT Exec Committee JohnSRNT

***Position Statement:***

*Tobacco Industry Funding of Research and Scientific Meetings Sept 10,2001*

The invitation by the Institute for Science and Health (ISFH), to participate in an October, 2001, Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company funded meeting (see [www.ifsh.org](http://www.ifsh.org)) prompted the SRNT Policy Committee to develop a position concerning the involvement of SRNT and its members in meetings and research sponsored by the tobacco industry. In the fall of 2000, SRNT recommended that its members not apply to the Philip Morris External Research Program (see [www.srnt.org](http://www.srnt.org)), but the IFSH invitations raised additional issues.

SRNT considered the need for guidance regarding tobacco industry funding from two perspectives: organization and individual

**(1)** Organization, i.e., what should SRNT's position be if offered funds from the tobacco industry to support its activities.

**(2)** Individual member, i.e., what should SRNT's advice be to its members regarding their participation in tobacco industry sponsored and/or funded meetings, and regarding acceptance of funding, materials or other forms of assistance for the conduct of research. Existing guidance documents pertaining to private sector support: American Medical Association (AMA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) SRNT considered the applicability of guidance documents from the CDC ([www.cdc.gov/tob/legal\\_policy/accepting\\_funding.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tob/legal_policy/accepting_funding.html)) and AMA ([www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/printcat/1904.html](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/printcat/1904.html)) concerning the acceptance of support from private sector. Both of these organizations share SRNT's goals of working to improve public health using science-based approaches that often involve private sector products.

The focus of the guidance from CDC and AMA differs in that the focus of the AMA is on the conditions under which it accepts support whereas the focus of the CDC is on providing guidance that individuals are encouraged to use in making their own decisions about the acceptability of support. The AMA guidance cites the tobacco industry as an example of an unacceptable source of support. The CDC guidance states that a condition for accepting support is shared public health values and actions.

### ***Recommendations***

- (1) SRNT endorses both the CDC and the AMA guidance concerning private sector support.
- (2) SRNT encourages its members to consider the CDC and AMA guidance in their own decision-making regarding the solicitation or acceptance of private sector support.
- (3) SRNT will continue to maintain its standards that have ruled out the acceptance of support from the tobacco industry.
- (4) SRNT does not endorse the support of its members' research or their participation in other activities funded by the tobacco industry (including the October, 2001, Brown and Williamson-funded meeting).
- (5) SRNT recommends that nontobacco industry organizations such as NIH provide substantially increased funding for tobacco product research and related activities.
- (6) Researchers who have obtained support from the tobacco industry (including products for testing and any form of funding) are strongly urged to provide full disclosure, insistence on independence, and the right to make such support and findings public.

SRNT recognized several issues that complicated its recommendations

- (1) SRNT recognized that the concept of a meeting to consider the appropriateness and potential mechanism of tobacco industry funding of science and health-related activities is worthy but concluded that such a meeting should not be sponsored by the industry.
- (2) SRNT recognized that there is a critical need for research in areas such as the evaluation of new tobacco products, and on tobacco product design and ingredients issues, for which there is no major source of nontobacco industry support.
- (3) In order to study new products that have not yet been marketed, it will be necessary to develop appropriate mechanisms and guidance for obtaining them for research. (4) There exists wide variation in the SRNT membership regarding these issues, and some members have had and/or continue to have some level of support from the tobacco industry.