



1. Introduction

The [Charity Commission](#) indicates that among charities there are two common types of conflict of interest: Loyalty Conflicts and Financial Conflicts.

Trustees have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of HSP Support Group (“**the Group**”) and to avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest. This policy sets out the expectations for all trustees, committee members, volunteers and those acting on behalf of or representing the Group (hereinafter referred to as Group Representatives)

The aim of this policy is to support honesty and integrity through an open declaration of such interests (through a register of interests) and, thereby, to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety. The register helps show that the Group acts properly.

Many Group Representatives have HSP or know someone with HSP: that in many respects is why such individuals devote time to support the Group’s efforts. It is accepted such individuals are likely to have an interest from time to time in the Group’s activities and its future success, as well as Trustee and Committee discussions and decisions: however, this connection should not be viewed as a conflict itself and does not need to be declared or disclosed.

2. Loyalty conflicts

These conflicts could happen when someone that represents the Group is unable to make decisions in the best interests of the charity. That can happen if the Group’s decision involves a person or organisation linked to the individual making the decision. For example:

- another charity where the individual that represents the Group similarly makes decisions
- clinicians, suppliers or services who treat or are of benefit to Group Representatives
- their relatives or friends

3. Financial conflicts

These may happen when Group Representatives get money or something of value from a decision. It may be a conflict, even if the Group gets a good deal for its money. Examples of potential conflicts include:

- paying someone representing the Group for doing their role (more than legitimate expenses)
- buying goods or services from an organisation owned by members or someone that represents the Group

4. How we manage conflicts

Four steps are followed:

- i. **Declare interests.** People representing the Group should inform the trustees if they have an interest. Interests shall be **kept in a register of interests**
- ii. **Checks on interests** should occur at the start of relevant meetings or discussions where a decision might happen.
- iii. **Follow the provisions set out in this Policy and the Group's Constitution.**
- iv. **Actively manage potential conflicts of interest.** This includes:
 - Individuals with interests can contribute to discussions, but cannot take part in decisions or be counted in any quorum
 - Individuals that represent the Group cannot benefit from the Group unless allowed by law or the Group's constitution
 - Decisions by the research committee about recommendations to award grants are made by consensus of the committee.
 - Decisions by the Trustees about awarding grants to members are made by majority decision after discussion
 - Checking all payments are authorised

5. Register of interests

A register of relevant interests (in form of the template below) shall be maintained and updated regularly. The register shall record details of the individual, their relationship to the group, details of the interest and potential conflict, and any agreed mitigation. Interests will remain in the register for a period of at least 2 years after the interest ceases to exist.

Date	Name of individual	Relationship to HSP Group	Description of Interest	Details of potential conflict	Steps taken to avoid conflict
Example					
XX XX 2021	John Smith	[Trustee] [Committee member]	[Personal benefit] [Family involvement] [Business connection] [Describe if other]	[Describe details of potential conflict]	[Conflict disclosed to the [Trustees][Committee]] [Individual recused themselves from the discussion or decision] [Describe if other]

The register is accessible to Trustees.

Next review: April 2023

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