



**Managing Conflicts of Interest in National Pharmaceutical Systems**  
**Call for Expressions of Interest**  
**June – August 2022**

The **Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN)** brings network members together for productive and high-impact practitioner-to-practitioner exchanges on a variety of health systems topics, often related to health finance or primary health care service delivery. In collaboration with USAID’s Medicines, Technologies and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program, JLN invites Expressions of Interest to participate in a learning exchange focused on managing conflicts of interest in national pharmaceutical systems.

*Description of topic*

A conflict of interest is “conflict between the public duty and private interests of public officials, in which public officials have private-capacity interests which could improperly influence the performance of their official duties and responsibilities”.<sup>1</sup> Public pharmaceutical decision making is particularly susceptible to conflicts of interest because pharmaceutical systems are complex and often involve discretionary decision making which may not have adequate checks and balances. Public pharmaceutical committees and agencies help decide, among other things, which medicines governments approve for marketing and include in national essential medicines and reimbursement lists; hence influencing which medicines clinicians prescribe and the prices that the public pay for them. Institutions that convene or individuals who serve on committees may have relationships with private sector and other actors, creating a risk that public pharmaceutical decision making is not independent, impartial, and professional.

With facilitation by USAID MTaPS, the learning exchange will bring together a group of frontline practitioners, international experts and country representatives to both exchange and improve their national strategies for conflicts of interest management through cross-country virtual engagements.

*Learning agenda*

By the end of the learning exchange, participants will be able to:

- Understand what is a conflict of interest in the context of the public pharmaceutical system and identify potential adverse outcomes associated with these conflicts of interests
- Explain the need for preventing and mitigating these conflicts of interest
- Describe practical guidance provided by WHO on how to prevent and manage conflicts of interest in the public pharmaceutical system
- Understand current conflict of interest issues in countries, and reflect on approaches to address them

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<sup>1</sup> OECD. (2003). Managing conflict of interest in the public service: OECD Guidelines and Country Experiences. Paris, France: OECD.

<https://www.oecd.org/gov/ethics/oecdguidelinesformanagingconflictinterestinthepublicservice.htm>

- Adapt and apply good practices for preventing and managing conflicts of interest in their public pharmaceutical system

### *Level of effort and duration*

The learning exchange will include a learning phase and a report-out phase. It will run from June to August 2022. It is anticipated that approximately a total of 20hrs of effort will be required by each participant, with time varying based on the complexity of each participant's intended action plan. Participants will be expected to join a total of five sessions, which includes three learning and two report-out sessions.

*Three learning sessions:* Each session will be 1.5 hours and focuses on guiding principles and good practices of conflicts of interest prevention and management. Participants will develop an action plan for improving conflicts of interest prevention and management in one or more public pharmaceutical committees or agencies and self-report on their plan three months after the initial three learning sessions.

*Two report-out sessions:* Grouped by country, participants will present their action plan and report on any steps taken to introduce or implement it, and barriers, enablers and lessons learnt from their experience.

### *Anticipated outputs and outcomes*

- Country team action plans for improving conflicts of interest management in one or more pharmaceutical committees or agencies in their own country or setting.
- A technical brief summarizing country experiences with conflict of interest management in the national pharmaceutical system and reflections on the use of WHO's how-to-guide.

### *Participant profile*

JLN/MTaPS seeks individuals from JLN member and non-JLN member countries who fit one of the following target profiles:

- Leads or serves as secretariat for a pharmaceutical committee (such as medicines selection, registration or procurement committees)
- Serves as manager or other personnel in units, departments, or agencies that make decisions in relation to medical products and or services (e.g. national medicines regulatory authority, medicines procurement agency).
- Participates in development or implementation of conflict of interest policy or procedures, or implementation, monitoring or oversight (e.g. government's ethics office, anticorruption commission or compliance officer).

### *How to submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi)*

Country teams should respond with their interest through this [link](#).

The technical facilitation team will review all Eols and make every effort to accommodate all interested countries. Please respond with your Expression of Interest by **April 29**. Countries will receive a response by **May 16**.