



**British Society of
Gastrointestinal and
Abdominal Radiology**
*Imaging and Intervention in
the care of Abdominal Disease*

BSGAR Conflict of interest Policy (Trustees, Executive Committee, Subcommittees and volunteers)

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Registered Charity Number: 1208678

Registered Address: BSGAR, The Royal College of Radiologists, 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3JW

Conflict of interest Policy

(For BSGAR Trustees, Executive Committee, Subcommittees and volunteers)

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure transparency and the open and proper management of any conflict of interest to protect both BSGAR and individuals from any appearance of impropriety. It aligns with and complements the provisions of BSGAR's Code of Conduct and should be read in conjunction with that document.

1.2 This policy for managing conflicts of interest (or perceived conflicts of interest) applies to any individual who is undertaking work on behalf of BSGAR as a Contributor on its Trustee Board, Executive Committee, Subcommittees or as a volunteer.

1.3 BSGAR handles conflicts of interest in the following way:

- 1.3.1 Identify the conflict of interest
- 1.3.2 Prevent the conflict of interest from affecting the decision making in standards, education or the business of the charity.
- 1.3.3 Record the conflict of interest
- 1.3.4 Remove a participant where the conflict of interest is undermining the activities of the charity.

2. Conflicts of interest

2.1 A conflict of interest is a situational condition, not an indication of misconduct. There is nothing wrong in the event of a conflict of interest, but it is important that these are identified and declared so that they can be managed appropriately.

2.2 Conflicts of interest may arise where an individual's personal or family interests' conflict or appear to conflict with those of the role that the individual is undertaking for BSGAR.

2.3 Conflicts can also arise between an individual's duty to the Society and some other public obligation, trusteeship of another organisation or membership of/ employment by another organisation. Therefore, the individual may have divided loyalties but does not stand to gain financially or in any other way.

2.4 A potential conflict is anything which could be perceived as impairing impartiality or objectivity and hence casts doubt over a decision that has been taken.

2.5 A professional opinion that diverges from established BSGAR standards, particularly when the individual has influence over those standards, should also be declared.

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3. Declaration of interests

3.1 All Contributors must consider what, if any, conflicts of interest or loyalty they may have with the duties and role they are undertaking for BSGAR. They must also consider any potential conflicts of interest or loyalty they might have or appear to have.

3.2 Contributors are expected to declare any conflict of interest or loyalty. Such a declaration is not a statement of 'wrongdoing' but ensures openness and transparency. If in doubt, an individual is advised to err on the side of caution and declare a potential conflict of interest.

3.3 All relevant members and parties are required to submit a declaration of interest, which is compiled into a central spreadsheet, and it is expected that all Contributors complete this outlining both real and perceived conflicts of interest. Members of BSGAR Committees must complete the declaration of interests' form, including with a nil return.

3.4 The BSGAR Secretary and BSGAR Administrator are responsible for maintaining a register of interests for respective groups. The register of interests should be available at all meetings of the Trustee Board, Executive Committee, and Subcommittees, or for inspection by trustees. Where deemed appropriate by the BSGAR Executive Committee and Trustees, the register may be published to ensure full openness and transparency in line with best practice.

3.5 The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. Data will be processed only to ensure that Contributors act in the best interests of BSGAR. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

3.6 All BSGAR committees (Trustee Board, Executive Committee, and Subcommittees) will include a standing agenda item for the declaration of any perceived new or previously undeclared conflicts of interest. Members are required to submit details of such COIs in writing to the Chair prior to the meeting. This ensures transparency, allows for appropriate management of conflicts, and avoids potential disruption or discomfort during meetings.

3.7 There are subcommittees where there is a high or an inevitable risk of conflicts (such as where BSGAR has to rely on the expertise of those who may also be involved in commercial developments in the same area of activity as the work of the board or committee). All BSGAR committees (Trustee Board, Executive Committee, and Subcommittees) will include a standing agenda item for the declaration of any perceived new or previously undeclared conflicts of interest. Members are required to submit details of such COIs in writing to the Chair prior to the meeting.

4. Management of conflicts of interest

4.1 It is important that any conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest are managed. In a Trustees, Executive Committee, Subcommittee context this will usually involve limiting the involvement of the conflicted individual in the decision making and/or decision taking process. Decision making is the discussion which takes place to inform, debate and consider a matter before a decision is taken.

4.2 It is the responsibility of the Chair(s) of the Subcommittee, Executive Committee or Board of Trustees to assess and manage the conflict, supported by the BSGAR Secretary. Options for the management of the conflict in terms of decision making and decision taking are:

- a. Full exclusion
- b. Partial exclusion
- c. Full involvement

4.3 While full exclusion from both the decision making and taking would be rare, it should not be discounted if the management of the conflict demands it. Partial exclusion, where a contributor remains for the decision making but not the decision taking, is likely to be more common. Full involvement would only be advised where there is a very low risk of actual or perceived inappropriate bias or influence of the decision. None of these options should be taken as the default position, and all options must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.4 The BSGAR Secretary is available to advise on how best to manage the conflict.

4.5 If the conflict is held by the Chair of the Trustees, Exec Committee or Subcommittee then the BSGAR Secretary must always be consulted on how to manage the decision making and decision taking process.

4.6 Similarly, if the majority of the Executive Committee or Subcommittee members are conflicted, or if a quorum cannot be achieved with non-conflicted members, advice must be sought from the BSGAR Secretary. In such circumstances, the matter may be escalated to the Trustees, who will act as the ultimate arbiter.

5. Recording conflicts of interest

5.1 All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The report will record:

- 5.1.1 the nature and extent of the conflict;
- 5.1.2 an outline of the discussion; and
- 5.1.3 the actions taken to manage the conflict.

5.2 The Chair(s) of the Subcommittee, Executive Committee or Board of Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the minutes of the meeting are a full and accurate record of all conflicts and the actions taken to manage them.

6. Compliance

All BSGAR Contributors are required to comply with this policy. In line with the Code of Conduct, any breaches of this policy will usually be managed under the BSGAR code of conduct policy.