

Author Financial Conflicts of Interest in Clinical Practice Guidelines for Systemic Anti-Cancer Drugs

A Tibau, PL Bedard, FE Vera-Badillo, AJ Templeton,
A Ocaña, B Seruga, A Barnadas, E Amir



Disclosures

Tibau, Ariadna: No relevant relationships to disclose

Bedard, Philippe L : No relevant relationships to disclose

Vera-Badillo, Francisco E. : No relevant relationships to disclose

Templeton, Arnoud J. : No relevant relationships to disclose

Ocaña, Alberto : No relevant relationships to disclose

Seruga, Bostjan : No relevant relationships to disclose

Barnadas, Agustí : No relevant relationships to disclose

Amir, Eitan : No relevant relationships to disclose

Conflicts of Interest in Clinical Guidelines

- Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) and consensus statements (CSs) are used to apply evidence-based medicine or expert recommendations to clinical practice.
- Conflicts of interest (COIs) are a set of conditions in which professional judgment may be unduly influenced by a secondary interest.¹
- Little is known about the influence of financial COIs (FCOIs) on the development of CPGs and CSs in oncology.

¹ Thompson DF. NEJM 329:573-6, 1993

Aims

- Assess the frequency and transparency in the reporting of external funding and author FCOIs in CPGs and CSs.
- Evaluate the frequency of use of external manuscript writers in CPGs and CSs.
- Explore whether author FCOIs, external funding or manuscript writers are associated with a greater probability of endorsement of specific anti-cancer drugs.

Methods

- **Identification and Selection of Studies:**
 - A MEDLINE search conducted to identify CPGs and CSs evaluating systemic therapy in common solid cancers (01/2003 – 10/2013).
- **Data Extraction & Synthesis:**
 - Data on funding sources, self reported author FCOIs and use of manuscript writers were extracted.
 - Major FCOIs were defined as employment, stock ownership or participation in speaker-bureau.
 - Other FCOIs were considered minor.

Methods

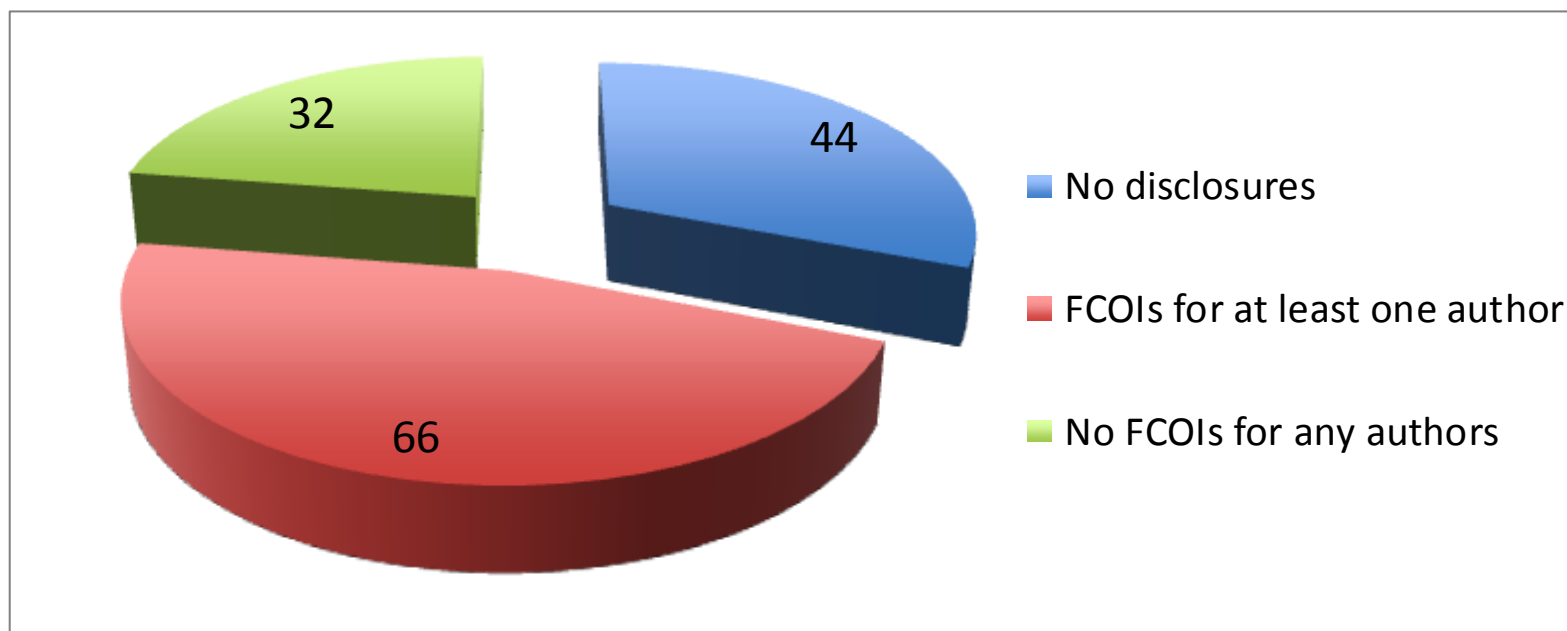
- **Data Extraction & Synthesis:**
 - Analysis was conducted initially for all authors and then limited to first, senior or corresponding authors.
 - Assessment of endorsement of drugs limited to abstracts.
- **Statistical Analysis:**
 - Data reported as proportions, medians and ranges.
 - Data analyzed using logistic regression and reported as odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI).

Results

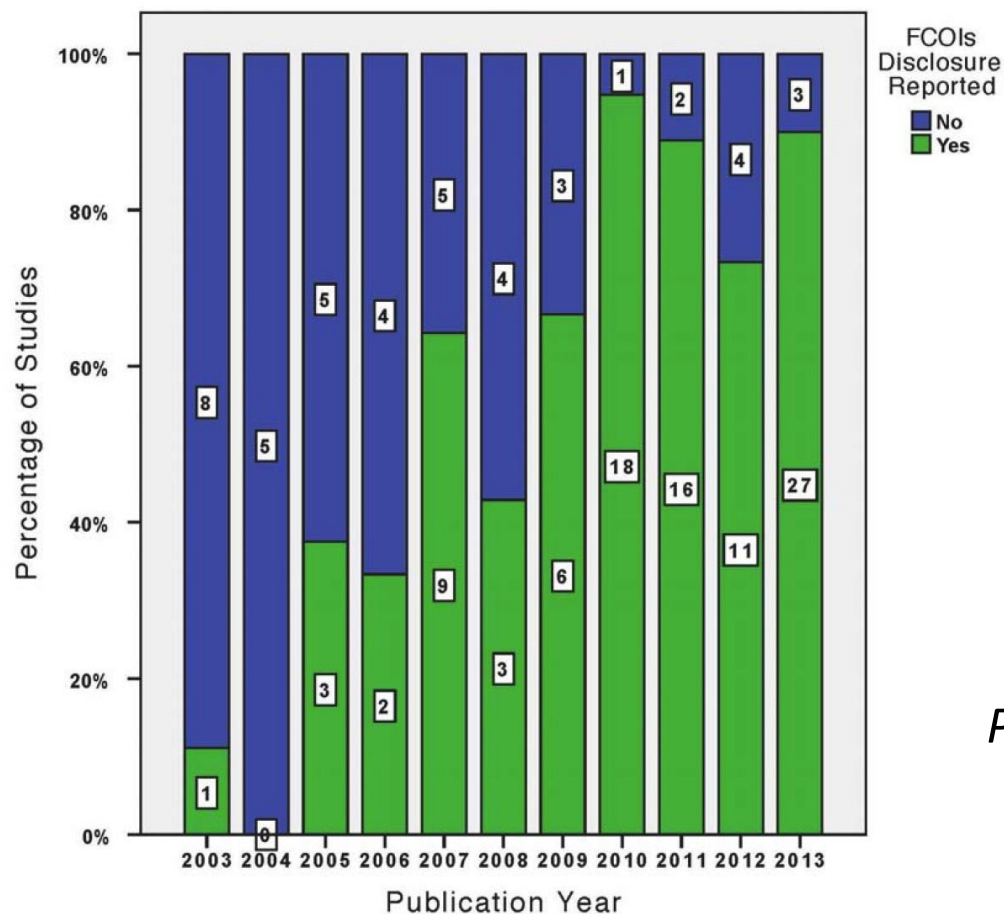
- 142 articles
 - 64% CPGs, 36% CSs.
 - Professional bodies predominantly published CPGs.
 - 44% were developed by European groups and 31% by North American groups.
 - Funding for guideline development was reported in 45% of cases
 - Full or partial industry funding was disclosed in 65% of these.
 - Use of external manuscript writers was disclosed in 13%.

FCOIs

- Ninety-eight articles (69%) provided disclosures for FCOIs of authors, while 44 (31%) did not disclose FCOIs.



Trends in the reporting of FCOIs over time



P for trend < 0.001

Predictors for endorsement of specific drugs

- Author FCOIs were strongly associated with endorsement of specific drugs:
 - OR 7.29, 95% CI 2.17-24.49, $P=0.001$
 - Statistical significance was maintained when limited to first, senior or corresponding authors
 - OR 3.81, 95% CI 1.34-10.79, $P=0.01$
- Endorsement of specific drugs was not associated with:
 - Industry funding (OR 0.95, 95% CI 0.86-1.06, $P=0.37$)
 - Manuscript writers (OR 1.70, 95% CI 0.45-6.44, $P=0.44$)

Limitations

- FCOIs disclosures self-reported and not verified.
- FCOI monetary values unreported and value-based analysis not feasible.
- Assessment of endorsement
 - Based on recommendation of specific drugs by name
 - Limited to abstracts of included articles.
- Relatively small sample of articles included in the analysis.

Conclusions

- Reporting of FCOIs in CPGs and CSs has improved over time.
- Author FCOIs in CPGs and CSs are prevalent.
- Endorsement of a specific drug is more frequent when authors have FCOIs with the company marketing that drug.
- Industry funding of the CPG or CS and use of external manuscript writers does not appear to influence such endorsement.
- Further research is needed to improve published standards for guideline development.