

# **AAOS Guidance Document on Appropriate Use Criteria (AUC) Panels**

The AAOS Board of Directors supports this position and has adopted this Guidance Document on Appropriate Use Criteria (AUC) Panels to advise clinicians of their eligibility to serve on AUC panels and the process to be used in making this determination.

# AAOS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA (AUC) PANELS

The composition and functions of the two panels involved in AUC development are:

- The AUC Writing Panel is composed of 6-10 clinicians who are experienced in the procedure/treatment under study. The Writing Panel creates the content and develops the indications, clinical scenarios, definitions and assumptions.

The AUC Voting Panel is composed of 10 – 15 multidisciplinary clinicians, half of whom are specialists in the topic. The Voting Panel rates the scenarios previously developed by the Writing Panel.

**Members of the AUC Writing Panel may have relevant financial conflicts of interest. While relevant financial conflicts of interest are allowed for members of the Writing Panel, these conflicts of interest must be reported to foster transparency in the process. Relevant financial conflicts of interest; however, preclude individuals from serving on the AUC Voting Panel.**

The AAOS Board of Directors supports this position and has adopted this Guidance Document on Appropriate Use Criteria (AUC) Panels to advise clinicians of their eligibility to serve on AUC panels and the process to be used in making this determination.

## **Background on AAOS Orthopaedic Disclosure Program as it Relates to AUCs**

1. Each Fellow or Member applying to participate or participating on an AUC Panel has the obligation to disclose all potentially relevant financial or nonfinancial conflicts of interests through the AAOS Orthopaedic Disclosure Program. Individuals who are not members of the AAOS applying to participate or participating in AUC Panels are also required to participate in the AAOS Orthopaedic Disclosure Program.
2. AAOS policy requires detailed financial information for each conflict noted by an applicant or member of an AUC Panel. This detailed information is not available to the public, is accessible to a limited number of AAOS staff and volunteers and will be used solely for purposes of resolution of conflict of interest issues.

## **AUC Panel Member Eligibility**

### **1. AUC Writing Panels**

It is permissible, and perhaps even desirable in certain circumstances, for members of the AUC Writing Panel to have relevant financial and nonfinancial conflicts of interest regarding the subject matter of the AUC. Applicants will be asked to disclose via the AAOS Orthopaedic Disclosure Program, and all disclosures will be included in the final report and shared with other members of the Panel during its deliberations.

## 2. AUC Voting Panels.

- a. AAOS Staff review the AAOS Orthopaedic Disclosure Program as well as data available via CMS OpenPayments. If a possible relevant financial conflict of interest is deemed to exist AAOS Staff will contact the applicant for additional information, which may include specific details and clarification as to the relevancy to the AUC topic.
- b. If a relevant financial conflict exists, the applicant is able to divest the conflict.
- c. An applicant with conflicts that exclude him/her from participation in an AUC Voting Panel also has the option to appeal the decision to the AAOS Committee on Ethics and Outside Interests, via the Director of Governance. If the candidate chooses to appeal, the AAOS Committee on Ethics and Outside Interests may request additional information regarding the perceived conflict. The Committee on Ethics and Outside Interests' decision regarding whether a relevant financial or nonfinancial conflict of interest exists and whether an individual should serve or remain a member of an AUC Voting Panel shall be considered final.
- d. AUC Voting Panel members are required to be free of any relevant conflicts of interest for a minimum of three years (on year prior to development, during development, and one year following publication). Each Voting Panel member is also required to sign an attestation statement, stating that he or she has no relevant conflicts of interest and will accept none for a full year following the approval of the AUC by the AAOS Board of Directors.
- e. Financial conflicts of interest will be deemed significant and preclude participation on the AUC Voting Panel if relevant financial conflicts exceed \$1,000 cumulatively. The AAOS disclosure and conflict of interest processes are developed with the goal of transparent and appropriate decision-making. This Guidance Document may be modified as other AAOS policies and procedures are developed.

Adopted: December 2012

Revised: March 2017

Maintained: October 2015

Revised: June 2017

Updated: October 2017

Revised: April 2019

# ATTESTATION

## Attestation Statement for Potential Appropriate Use Criteria (AUC) Voting Panel Members with No Relevant Conflicts

*If you wish to be considered as a candidate to serve on an AUC Voting Panel, please know that you will be required to disclose potential conflicts of interest at the same level as the AAOS Board of Directors prior to beginning work on any AUC. This disclosure is more detailed than regular member disclosure and includes specific financial information.*

By signing this affidavit, I am stating that I have no relevant conflicts concerning the subject matter of the AUC regarding [ ]

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I attest that I will not enter into relationships that might create a conflict of interest situation (i.e. accepting paid consulting fees etc.) both during the time the AUC is being developed and for one year after the AAOS Board of Directors' approval of the AUC.

Please Print:

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_