



The University of Tennessee Health Science Center

FINDER'S FEES

Effective October 1, 1991

Background

UT Health Science Center is committed to education, research and service and to upholding the highest ethical standards related to each of these functions.

In fulfilling its research and service functions, UT Health Science Center frequently is involved in clinical investigations of new products developed by pharmaceutical companies. Some of these companies offer to pay finder's fees to encourage patient recruitment efforts. Such payments, generally, are made to residents, physicians, nurses, or others in a position to identify patients who might qualify for enrollment into a study; the fee is paid only for patients who are actually enrolled into the study.

The Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs of the American Medical Association denounced the practice of fee splitting in its 1989 publication, "Current Opinions." Just as fee splitting represents a conflict of interest for the referring physician in a professional relationship with the patient, a similar potential for that situation exists when a finder's fee is offered health professionals for patient recruitment. There is also the risk that a finder's fee for patient entry onto a study will subvert the process of securing informed patient consent.

Policy

In order to maintain the highest ethical standards, to avoid any potential or perceived conflict of interest, and to protect its students and employees to the fullest extent possible, The University of Tennessee Health Science Center will not participate in and its employees and students are prohibited from participating in the payment of finder's fees to medical residents, physicians, nurses, or other individuals or entities for the recruitment of patients as participants in clinical investigations involving human subjects.