

North American Spine Society

NASS Actions related to Disclosure & Industry Relationships

TIMELINE

- Oct 1996 NASS Adopts "Acceptance of Appointment and Covenant to Disclose" form, required for all those accepting leadership positions.
- Oct 2000 SpineLine Sep/Oct 00 issue – Legal Column: "Conflicts of Interest: Legal Perspectives for Scientific Research and Patient Care" *Ed Benzel, MD & Philip Benton, MD, JD*
- Aug 2001 SpineLine July/Aug 01 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: "Proprietary Interests in Devices and Therapies: Abstinence vs. Full Disclosure" *Edward C Benzel, MD.*
- Nov 2001 Stan Herring becomes NASS President, declares official focus of year to be on Ethics & Professionalism
- Dec 2001 SpineLine Nov/Dec 01 issue – Herring President's Message, "Service to Patients and Professionalism: An Important Reaffirmation"
<<http://www.spine.org/Documents/pm01novdec.pdf>>
- Feb 2002 NASS signs AMA House of Delegates Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs' "Declaration of Professional Responsibility: Medicine's Social Contract with Humanity"
- Oct 2002 NASS Board adopts Code of Ethics, Expert Witness Guidelines; expands existing NASS Ethics Committee into "Professional Conduct & Ethics Committee" (PCEC)
- Oct 2002 NASS membership at Montreal Business Meeting Ratifies Board's Adoption of Code of Ethics and creation of Professional Conduct Program
- Oct 2002 Dr. Stanley A. Herring delivers Presidential Address at NASS Montreal Annual Meeting, titled "A Plea for Professional Behavior," discussing the new *Code of Ethics*, Professional Conduct Program, and the *Declaration of Professional Responsibility*
- Oct 2002 SpineLine Sep/Oct 02 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: "AMA Ethical Guidelines on Gifts to Physicians from Industry" *Edward C Benzel, MD*
- Dec 2002 Submission of first case to Professional Conduct & Ethics Committee (PCEC)
- Jan 2003 Dr. Herring's Presidential Speech published in *The Spine Journal*
- Feb 2003 SpineLine Jan/Feb 03 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: "NASS Adopts Strong Professional Conduct & Ethics Program" *Russ Pelton, Esq.*
- Feb 2003 submission of first case to progress to a Prof. Conduct Hearing
- Apr 2003 Section on *Ethics Related to Relationships with Industry* added to Code of Ethics
- Apr 2003 Section on *Ethics Related to Research* added to Code of Ethics
- Oct 2003 PCEC recommends to NASS Board the creation of a Task Force to deal with issue of industry relationships and disclosure

- Jan 2004 AdvaMed adopts voluntary Code of Ethics for Industry members
- Feb 2004 *SpineLine* Jan/Feb 04 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “Medical Research Funding and Informed Consent” *Eric J Muehlbauer, MJ, CAE*
- Sep 2004 ACCME approves updated *Standards for Commercial Support*
- Dec 2004 *SpineLine* Nov/Dec 04 issue – Abitbol President’s Message, “Changing Tide in Health Care Leads to Guidelines on Medical Ethics”
<<http://www.spine.org/Documents/pm04novdec.pdf>>
- Apr 2005 First meeting of NASS Disclosure Task Force created by Board of Directors
- Aug 2005 *SpineLine* Jul/Aug 05 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “NASS Code of Ethics Expanded to Cover Industry Relationships” *Stan Herring, MD*
- Sep 2005 First PC hearing held; PCEC recommends censure, recommendation accepted by Board and letter of censure published in next issue of *SpineLine*
- Sep 2005 First Annual Meeting General Session Ethics Symposium, Thu, September 29, 2005 1:26-3:36PM—“*Ethics in Spinal Medicine and Surgery*” Chair: David Fardon, MD.
- From Program: “Virtually all medical care providers are interested in practicing the best quality and the most ethical medicine possible. However, many practitioners are not aware of a number of outside forces that influence their education, both in training and in practice, and therefore, their decision making process. There is growing concern that professional judgment about the welfare of patients may be inappropriately influenced by secondary interests, e.g. personal gain derived from relationships with industry. This symposium explores the ethical issues that arise in a practice setting and the forces that affect decision making for spine clinicians. It may feature interactive questions during the course of the discussion, and a final analysis of the ethical issues to be considered.”*
- Jan 2006 NASS Board adopts Conflict of Interest Disclosure Policy recommended by Task Force
- Feb 2006 Jan/Feb 2006 issue of *SpineLine* implements new disclosure policy for all authors
- Mar 2006 *SpineLine* Jan/Feb 06– Ethical/Legal Special Feature: “Financial Conflict of Interest: NASS Adopts Bold Disclosure Policy.” *Sohail Mirza, MD & Stanley A Herring, MD*
- New policy is adopted for use in all NASS CME activities, publications, and meetings of committees and leadership*
- Jun 2006 *SpineLine* May/June 06 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “NASS Expands Code of Ethics to Include Research” *Russ Pelton, Esq.*
- Apr 2006 *SpineLine* Mar/Apr 06 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “The Physician Investor: Godsend or Pariah?” *Marjorie Eskay-Auerbach, MD, JD*
- Jun 2006 *SpineLine* May/June 06 issue – Press President’s Message, “Conflicts? What Conflicts?”
<<http://www.spine.org/Documents/pm06mayjun.pdf>>

- Sep 2006 Annual Meeting General Session Ethics Symposium, Thu, September 28, 2006
7:30-9:30AM—*“Ethics and Spine Care in 2006”* Moderators: Stanley A. Herring, MD, Richard D. Guyer, MD
- From Program: “This symposium addresses ethical considerations of spine care, specifically, ethical issues encountered in the field of medicine. Representatives from the pharmaceutical industries and AdvaMed will discuss steps that are being taken to ensure ethical guidelines are followed. Legal ramifications of unethical behavior also will be discussed. Specific real life cases of potential conflict of interest are presented and information from the audience will be garnered to stimulate discussion.”*
- Sep 2006 First NASS Annual Meeting held for which new disclosure policy was implemented in entire abstract submission process
- Nov 2006 *SpineLine* Sep/Oct 06 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “Ethical Issues Associated with Health Care Industry Representatives in the Operating Room” *Moskowitz/Ford*
- Jan 2007 *SpineLine* Nov/Dec 06 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “Financial Success and Ethical Practice: An Oxymoron?” *Jerome Schofferman, MD*
- Feb 2007 *SpineLine* Jan/Feb 07 issue – Ethical/Legal Column: “NASS Expands Scope of Expert Witness Guidelines” *Russ Pelton, Esq.*
- Jun 2007 *SpineLine* May/June 07 issue – Guyer President’s Message, “NASS Takes Leadership Role in Ethics” <<http://www.spine.org/Documents/pm07mayjun.pdf>>
- Aug 2007 *SpineLine* Jul/Aug 07 issue – Commentary: “NASS is Growing and Raising the Bar— Looking Out for its Members by Pushing the Field for Objectivity” *NASS Presidential Line and Executive Director*
- Oct 2007 Annual Meeting General Session Ethics Symposium, Thu, October 25, 2007
7:25-9:30AM—*“Industry Relationships: How to Keep the Department of Justice from Knocking on Your Door.”* Chairs: Stanley A Herring, MD and Richard Guyer, MD.
- An in-depth look at the moral, ethical and legal implications of relationships with the device industry, including research on the science of bias presented by Dr. Sohail Mirza, MD; and a “pop quiz” using the audience response system, whereby audience members in this general session symposium were presented with scenarios for industry interaction and asked to judge whether the interaction was legal and—a higher bar—ethical. After responses were tabulated, Peter Winn from the Department of Justice gave his viewpoint.*
- Feb-Mar 2008 NASS cooperates with Senate Special Committee on Aging in their inquiry and submits written statement subsequent to Committee hearing regarding Conflicts of Interest in Physician-Industry Relationships
- Mar 2008 NASS submits written statement to Institutes of Medicine for their hearing regarding Conflicts of Interest in Physician-Industry Relationships
- Mar 2008 *SpineLine* Mar/Apr 08 issue – Faciszewski President’s Message, “NASS: A Leader in Age of Transparency.” <<http://www.spine.org/Documents/pm08marapr.pdf>>