


Title	Conflict of Interest			
Department	Corporate	Section	Organisation	
Approved by	CEO	Document Type	Policy	

POLICY STATEMENT

South Gippsland Hospital (SGH) employees, Board of Management (BoM) members, VMOs, contractors, students and volunteers must ensure their personal or financial interests do not influence or interfere with the performance of their role. They seek to ensure the interests of family members, friends or associates do not influence or could be perceived to influence the performance of their role.

SGH adheres to all aspects of Section 7(b)(iv) of the *Public Administration Act 2004* and Clause 3.7 of the *Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees 2015* which outline the legislative requirements for public sector employees regarding actual or apparent conflicts of interest.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the SGH Fraud, Corruption and other losses policy.

DEFINITIONS

A **conflict of interest** at SGH is considered as a conflict between organisational duties and private interests or those of related parties. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses, as well as gaining advantage either personally or for a related party — whether financial or otherwise. These can be actual, potential or perceived.

An **actual conflict of interest** is one where there is an actual conflict between an employee's, BoM member's, VMO's, Contractor's, student's or volunteer's organisational duties and responsibilities, and their private interests.

A **potential conflict of interest** arises where an employee, BoM member, VMO, Contractor, student or volunteer has private interests that could conflict with their organisational duties.

A **perceived conflict of interest** can exist where a third party could form the view that an employee's, BoM member's, VMOs, Contractors, students or volunteer's private interest could improperly influence the performance of their duties, now or in the future.

An **interest** in this context means anything that can have an impact on an individual or group. The term 'private interests' includes not only an employee's own personal, professional or business interests, but also the personal, professional or business interests of individuals or groups with whom they are closely associated. This can include relatives, friends or even rivals and enemies.

Private interests can be divided into two types:

Pecuniary interests involve an actual, potential or perceived financial gain or loss. Money does not need to change hands for an interest to be pecuniary.


Non-pecuniary interests do not have a financial component. They may arise from personal or family relationships, or involvement in sporting, social or cultural activities.

VMO- Visiting Medical Officer

Contractor- refers to anyone who contracts a service to SGH and who is expected to complete a Declaration of Conflict of Interest in accordance with Health Purchasing Victoria policy if appropriate.

Student- refers to anyone using SGH as a placement for educational purposes eg. medical, nursing, secondary schools.

Prompt Doc No: SGH0127576	Page 1 of 5	Last review: 17/08/2023
Version No. 6.0	UNCONTROLLED WHEN DOWNLOADED	Next review: 17/08/2026
Version Changed: 17/08/2023		

Title	Conflict of Interest			
Department	Corporate	Section	Organisation	
Approved by	CEO	Document Type	Policy	

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Employees, BoM members, VMOs, Contractors, students and volunteers are expected to act with:

Impartiality

- making decisions and providing advice on merit without bias, caprice, favouritism or self-interest
- acting fairly by objectively considering all relevant facts and applying fair criteria
- implementing Government policies and programs equitably.

Accountability

- working to clear objectives in a transparent manner
- accepting responsibility for their decisions and actions
- seeking to achieve best use of resources
- submitting themselves to appropriate scrutiny.

Integrity

- being honest, open and transparent in their dealings
- using powers responsibly
- reporting improper conduct
- avoiding or managing actual or apparent conflicts of interest
- striving to earn and sustain public trust at the highest level.

RESPONSIBILITY

The CEO, under the direction of the BoM, is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of an organisational environment that helps and encourages effective decision making when conflicts of interest arise.

The Executive Team, including the Quality and Risk Manager are responsible for providing, implementing and promoting policies, processes and practices that create and sustain a culture of integrity. This will include


- having clear protocols and procedures to advise and record disclosed conflicts of interest; refer to attached forms *Conflict of Interest Declaration, Form 483* and *Conflict of Interest register, Form 484*.
- ensuring staff and volunteers with management responsibility complete and annual Key Management Personnel Related Party Disclosure form
- assisting staff with guidance and training to promote understanding of the established rules and practices and their application to the working environment. This will include mandatory training, information flyers and Code of Conduct booklets available on orientation and by request.
- encouraging open communication and dialogue so that staff are comfortable disclosing and discussing conflicts of interest in the workplace; need to look at communication forums
- protecting information about disclosed conflicts of interest from misuse by others by providing a secure location for forms *Conflict of Interest Declaration, Form 483* and *Conflict of Interest register, Form 484*.

Employees, BoM members, VMOs, Contractors, students or volunteers are expected to take reasonable steps to manage any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

The CEO and BoM will take responsibility for authorising and managing all conflicts of interest.

The Conflict-of-Interest Registers will be tabled at each BOM and sub-committee meeting.

Prompt Doc No: SGH0127576	Page 2 of 5	Last review: 17/08/2023
Version No. 6.0	UNCONTROLLED WHEN DOWNLOADED	Next review: 17/08/2026
Version Changed: 17/08/2023		

Title	Conflict of Interest			
Department	Corporate	Section	Organisation	
Approved by	CEO	Document Type	Policy	

MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

SGH recognises proper management of conflicts of interest does not require the wholesale avoidance or relinquishment of private interests that might give rise to a conflict of interest issue.

Management of the interaction between private interests and organisational duties will be achieved by:

- **Registration** – details of the existence of a possible or potential conflict of interest are formally advised and noted. Documentation must include *Conflict of Interest Declaration, Form 483* and *Conflict of Interest register, Form 484*.
- **Restricting** – restrictions are placed on the employee, BoM member, VMO, Contractor, student or volunteers involvement in the matter
- **Recruitment** – a disinterested third party is appointed to oversee part or all of the process that deals with the matter
- **Removal** – the employee, BoM member, VMO, Contractor, student or volunteer does not participate at all in the matter
- **Relinquishing** – the private interest concerned is relinquished
- **Resignation** – the employee, BoM member, VMO, Contractor, student or volunteer steps down from the position they hold on a temporary or permanent basis.

OUTCOMES


- SGH will have processes in place to manage all actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and related party disclosures that may have an adverse impact on the operations of its service including customers, staff, operations, assets and/or reputation.
- Members of the public, stakeholders, partner agencies and client groups will be made aware of the organisations policy and procedures for managing conflicts of interest on the SGH website.

REFERENCES

Health Purchasing Victoria Policy Public Administration Act 2015
Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees, 2007
Australian Accounting Standard AASB124, 2017

Contributors

	Name/Position	Department/Committee
Owner	Paul Greenhalgh, CEO	Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC)
Lead Reviewer	Paul Greenhalgh, CEO	Executive
Contributor/s		
Gender Impact Assessment Required	No	
Previous Approvals	April 2021 November 2021 May 2021	CEO CEO ARMC
Approved Date	May 2023 – endorsed at ARMC May 2023	


Title	Conflict of Interest			
Department	Corporate	Section	Organisation	
Approved by	CEO	Document Type	Policy	

Appendix 1 Conflict of Interest Declaration

Conflict of Interest Declaration (Form 483)

At a minimum, South Gippsland Hospital designates a conflict of interest as a actual, potential or perceived conflict between organisational duties and private interests. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses, as well as gaining personal advantage — whether financial or otherwise.

Completed by employee, BoM member, VMOs , Contractors, students or volunteer of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest		
Description of Conflict of interest:		
Indicate type of Conflict of Interest Actual, potential or perceived		
Date interest described above became a conflict:		
Name of Declarant (please print)		
Signature of recipient	Date	
Noted by authorised delegate		
Signature	Date	
Name	Role	Date
Authorised by CEO		
Signature	Date	
Name	Role	Date
Conflict of Interest Register updated		
Signature	Date	
Name	Role	Date

Title	Conflict of Interest			
Department	Corporate	Section	Organisation	
Approved by	CEO	Document Type	Policy	

Appendix 2 Conflict of Interest Register

Conflict of Interest Register (Form 484)

Date	Person involved (name, role, organisation)	Description of Interest	Description of conflict	Management of conflict	Authorised by (name, role, organisation)