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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 5:00 PM ET ON AUGUST 27, 2009

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ASN COMMITTED TO MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

ASN Publishes Policy on Conflict of Interest

Washington, DC (August 21, 2009) — Twenty-six million Americans suffer from kidney disease, and for decades nephrologists in academia, practice, and industry have enhanced their quality of care. To ensure that partnerships between the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) and industry continue to improve kidney health, ASN leaders convened the Committee on Corporate Relations in 2008. Publications resulting from this committee’s efforts set will help guide medical societies and industry in their efforts to advance patient care, research, and education.

In an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* (JASN), ASN publishes the “ASN Policy on Managing Conflicts of Interest” and presents 10 recommendations that guide best practices on how to “design, monitor, and enforce regulations that insure appropriate Society’s interactions with industry.” Drawn from ASN’s long history of responsible partnerships with industry as well as extensive research and self-assessment, this article provides compelling guidelines for ethical approaches to these important partnerships.

These recommendations “are based on the premise that societies can develop beneficial partnerships with commercial interests as long as the Society’s leaders, staff, and members appropriately and responsibly manage their relationships with these entities.” The ASN Council unanimously approved all 10 of the committee’s recommendations.

In coordination with the online release of the article and an accompanying editorial entitled, “Managing Conflicts of Interest: The Road Ahead,” ASN will launch a webpage on August 27 that provides information about managing conflicts of interest on the Society’s website (www.asn-online.org) that includes:

1. Links to the above mentioned JASN article and the “Final Report of the ASN Committee on Conflict of Interest”;
2. A timeline that includes links to important resources on conflicts and bias; and

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3. Information about congressional legislation related to conflicts and bias.

ASN will also address this topic during its upcoming annual educational meeting, Renal Week 2009, which will take place from October 27-November 1 in San Diego, CA. Bernard Lo, MD, who chaired the IOM panel that produced “Conflicts of Interest in Medical Research, Education, and Practice,” will present the Christopher R. Blagg Endowed Lectureship on “Conflicts of Interest in Medicine” on October 29 during the Public Policy Forum from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

In the conclusion of “ASN Policy on Managing Conflicts of Interest,” ASN invites other medical societies to “join together to articulate national standards for managing relationships with commercial interests.” The Society continues to lead the fight against kidney disease by attempting to address complex areas of significance, such as the management of conflicts of interest.

The article, “ASN Policy on Managing Conflicts of Interest,” doi 10.1681/ASN.2009060676 and editorial, “Managing Conflicts of Interest: The Road Ahead,” doi: 10.1681/ASN.2009060677 will appear in JASN online at <http://jasn.asnjournals.org/> on August 27, 2009.

Founded in 1966, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) is the world’s largest professional society devoted to the study of kidney disease. Comprised of 11,000 physicians and scientists, ASN continues to promote expert patient care, advance medical research, and educate the renal community. ASN also informs policymakers about issues of importance to kidney doctors and their patients. ASN funds research, and through its world-renowned meetings and first-class publications, disseminates information and educational tools that empower physicians.

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