Public/Private Collaborations: Are they worth the effort?

Barbara Van Der Pol, PhD, MPH
University of Alabama at Birmingham
Disclosures
(Research Support, Consulting or Honorarium)

Research Grants to my Institution
- NIH
- CDC
- BD Diagnostics
- binx Health
- Cepheid
- Hologic
- NeuMoDx
- Rheonix
- Roche Molecular
- SpeeDx

Salary/Consulting Honoraria
- UAB
- NIH
- CDC
- FDA
- BD Diagnostics
- BioFire
- Roche Molecular
- SpeeDx
Conflating Disclosures with Conflicts

• TRANSPARENCY is the first goal

• Managing conflicts follows from transparency

• Perspectives are always influenced by environment/context

• Based on my disclosures, can I reasonably be expected to be fair about...
Defining Public & Private: *It’s all about perspective!*

- Industry/Academia or Industry/Health Departments
  - Does it matter if it is the R&D, marketing or philanthropic arm of a sponsor???

- Academia/Health Department
  - Who pays the costs and how does that affect staffing or other aspects of Health Dept. function?

- Private practice/Industry

- NGO’s fall where?
Perspective is Influenced by Environment

- Historic paradigm of academic/public health collaboration for STD control
- Increasing reliance on private practice for clinical trials
- Investigator initiated studies
Cui Bono

• The population we serve (Public Health)
  – High quality, reliable, reproducible data
  
  – New treatments/vaccines/diagnostics
    • For everyone
    • For clients using public health services
  
  – Evidence for best practices
    • Clinical practices
    • Treatment guidelines
    • Outcomes measures
Cui Bono (II)

• The population we serve (Public Health)
  – New treatments/vaccines/diagnostics
  – Evidence for best practices

• Our institution
  – Access to new technology
  – Support for research that federal grants don’t support
  – Support for trainees

• Individual Researchers
  – Knowledge about cutting edge technologies
  – Recognition as expert in the field
  – $$?
Consider the Alternatives

- Evaluation data of unknown quality
- Lack of access to new technologies
  - Affects patients
  - Affects ability to adapt new technologies to other applications
- Lack of understanding of the work flow in real world settings
- Inability to answer real questions that are not suitable for federal funding.
How to Avoid Pitfalls

• Choose wisely
  – Participate in strong science
  – Work with trusted partners

• Avoid being a sales rep
  – Speak in generic terms about products as a class
  – Provide new data, but don’t forget the old
  – Stand up for your principles
Joan Chow, DrPH, MPH
Former Chief, Surveillance, Epidemiology, Assessment & Evaluation Section - Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch
California Dept of Public Health, San Francisco, CA

Tabetha Sundin, PhD, HCLD (ADD), MB (ASCP)CM
Scientific Director, Molecular Diagnostics and Serology
Sentara Healthcare, Norfolk, VA

Marie-Clarie Rowlinson, PhD, D(ABMM)
Assistant Laboratory Director/CLIA Laboratory Director
Bureau of Public Health Laboratories, Jacksonville, FL

Barbara Van Der Pol, PhD, MPH
Professor of Medicine
Director, UAB STD Laboratory
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

ASK THE PANEL