As a sponsor of continuing medical education accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), The Society of Thoracic Surgeons requires that any individual who is in a position to control the content of an educational activity must disclose all relevant financial relationships (including known relationships of his or her immediate family, and partners) with any health care-related business or other entity whose products or services may be discussed in, or directly affected by, the marketplace by, the educational content. The question of whether a disclosed conflict situation could represent undue influence on the educational activity by a commercial interest or whether the disclosed information is sufficient to consider an abstract, presentation, or other educational material to represent potentially biased information must be resolved prior to an individual's involvement in STS educational programming.

Required disclosures include: (1) a financial interest of any amount (e.g., through ownership of stock, stock options, or bonds) (2) the receipt of any amount of cash, goods or services within the current 12-month period (e.g., through research grants, employment, consulting fees, royalties, travel, or gifts) or (3) a nonremunerative position of influence (e.g., an officer, director, trustee or public spokesperson).

NOTE: To avoid confusion with regard to the question of “relevance,” STS requires that anyone in a position to control content (planners, speakers, authors, volunteer leaders, staff) must review the content they are addressing and disclose relationships with companies that have a material interest in the content being covered regardless of the division of the company for which that relationship exists. For instance, if a speaker will be referencing a product made by the X division of ABC company, but the relationship is with the Y division, the speaker must disclose the relationship. Excluded from this disclosure requirement are blind trusts or other passive investments such as mutual funds. In the case of a financial or other relationship disclosure, the company, product/service, and specific nature of the relationship must be noted.Disclosure is mandatory for any person involved in the planning, management, presentation, and/or evaluation of STS educational activities.

Failure to disclose relevant financial relationships disqualifies the individual from being a planning committee member, a teacher, or an author of CME materials, and this individual cannot have advertising, trade names or a product described (a) the use of a device, product, or drug that is not FDA approved or (b) an off-label use of an approved device, product, or drug must also be disclosed. This requirement has been adopted in response to FDA policy and recent case law involving medical devices, and is not intended to prohibit or inhibit independent presentation or discussion regardless of the uses of devices, products, and drugs as described in (a) or (b) above.

For live presentations, all disclosures must be stated orally or on a slide at the beginning of the presentation and will be noted in published material related to the activity. Slides, handouts, and other materials utilized as part of an educational activity cannot contain any advertising, trade names or a product group message. Speakers are required to disclose that they have nothing to disclose if this is the case.

Amended by the STS Executive Committee: June 9, 2010

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons designates this live activity for a maximum of 28.50 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. It is merely to identify such relationships. It is not intended to imply that these constitute a conflict of interest or influence (e.g., as officer, director, trustee or (3) a nonremunerative position of influence (e.g., an officer, director, trustee or public spokesperson).