

# Patient group interaction and support

*Pharmaceutical companies are increasingly partnering with patient groups on projects ranging from disease awareness campaigns to clinical trial design and implementation. Governments and the media are calling for more transparency in terms of how the industry interacts with these groups, including the provision of financial and in-kind support. Novartis fully supports the need for public transparency and consistently high standards of conduct in our interactions with patient organizations.*

## Novartis Position

Novartis' commitment to patients is demonstrated in many ways throughout the company and is fundamental to what we believe to be our most significant contribution to society: the discovery, development, production, and distribution of high quality health care products that target unmet medical needs.

Building and sustaining relationships with patient advocates and the groups they represent is an important way we can help meet our patient commitment and our commitment to society as a whole. As we share balanced, accurate and easy-to-understand scientific information on diseases, treatments, and health policies impacting patients, we learn about patient concerns and needs. Patient advocates also offer us valuable insights and counsel that inform our work around the world and across therapeutic areas – from drug development through regulatory approval and reimbursement into product launch and marketing.

Novartis believes open dialogue and transparent exchange of information among all the stakeholders in the healthcare community is vital to advancing access and healthcare delivery to patients. In all Novartis' interactions with Patient Groups and professional associations, we strive to build relationships based on mutual respect and transparency. As part of our ongoing commitment to these principles, we have

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adopted internal guidelines on interacting with Patient Groups to establish consistently high standards of conduct. In addition, we plan to publish the names of Patient Groups that receive financial support from us in Europe and the United States on our global website, starting in July 2007.