

**From:** MaryMoon Allison  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 03, 2008 1:24 PM  
**To:** MaryMoon Allison  
**Cc:** Jeanne Floyd; Debbie Hatmaker  
**Subject:** environmental scanning info

I received the information below today from one of our accredited organizations. This is provided as an FYI.

**PFIZER: To End Direct Financial Support for Some CME Courses**

[Pfizer](#) officials recently announced that the company will no longer provide direct financial support for continuing medical education courses offered by for-profit medical education and communication companies, the Wall Street Journal reports. However, Pfizer will continue to provide direct financial support for CME courses offered by not-for-profit organizations, academic institutions, teaching hospitals and those supported by medical societies, which often contract with for-profit medical education companies. Pfizer also will honor current commitments to for-profit companies that offer CME programs. Cathryn Clary, vice president of U.S. external medical affairs at Pfizer, said that the decision to no longer provide direct financial support for CME courses offered by for-profit companies "has to do with mitigating the perception of a conflict of interest." She added that Pfizer decided to continue to provide direct financial support for CME courses offered by other organizations and institutions because "their primary mission is patient care." According to Clary, for-profit companies received less than half of the \$80 million that Pfizer spent on CME courses last year. Clary said that Pfizer has provided financial support for CME courses because they can improve patient care and can "be aligned, in some cases, with our business interests" but added that the company does not require courses to promote Pfizer products. A report compiled last year by the [Senate Finance Committee](#) found that pharmaceutical companies use educational grants valued at \$1 billion annually to increase the market for their products (Loftus, Wall Street Journal, 7/3).

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"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

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