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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **ISMPPP Endorses Transparent Writing Collaboration In Scientific Publications and Medical Society Guideline Prohibiting Ghostwriting**

*Briarcliff Manor, NY, May 6, 2010:* The Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS), representing over 30 member organizations, has recently adopted a Code for Interaction with Companies. While recognizing the role pharmaceutical and device companies play in developing and marketing products to help patients live longer and healthier lives, CMSS has appropriately issued the voluntary code to help ensure medical society interactions with industry meet the highest ethical standards as they relate to transparency and independence.

“It is tremendous to see such a significant organization respecting the role by which the industry benefits medical practice, while adding to the framework of integrity and guidance particularly in the area of transparency,” said Julia Ralston, president of The International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP).

Many of the principles covered in the Code define the manner in which societies should ensure independent control of educational and scientific programs and advocacy positions. The Code further defines the need for societies to prohibit submission of "ghostwritten" manuscripts prepared for or on behalf of industry companies. ISMPPP endorses this position as it is entirely consistent with good publication practice.<sup>1, 2</sup>

Medical organizations such as the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) have also previously clearly distinguished ghostwriting from transparent professional writing collaboration in scientific publications. AAMC defined ghostwriting "as the provision of written material that is officially credited to someone other than the writer(s) of the material. Transparent writing collaboration with attribution between academic and industry investigators, medical writers, and/or technical experts is not ghostwriting. The unacknowledged, undisclosed provision of content should not be permitted under any circumstances."

ISMPP supports all efforts to fully acknowledge the involvement of a professional medical writer whenever a professional writer has provided support to the author(s) responsible for development of a manuscript. Ms. Ralston adds, “Albeit ISMPPP’s interests are specifically in medical publications, similar to the CMSS, we support full potential conflict of interest and financial disclosures, and all

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<sup>1</sup>Norris R, Bowman A, Fagan JM, et al. International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP) position statement: the role of the professional medical writer. *Current Medical Research and Opinions*. 2007;23(8):1837-1840.

<sup>2</sup>Graf C, Battisti W, Bridges D, et al. Good publication practice for communicating company sponsored medical research: the GPP2 guidelines. *BMJ* 2009;339:b4330 doi: 10.1136/bmj.b4330



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efforts to discourage ghostwriting, while acknowledging the appropriate role of professional medical writers.”

**About the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals:** ISMPP is an independent non-profit professional association with members from the pharmaceutical, medical device, and biotechnology industries; publication planning and medical communication companies; academia; and medical journal staff, including editors and publishers. Its goals are to support the educational needs of medical publication professionals and to develop best practices that ensure the rigorous maintenance of all ethical standards for reporting results of medical research. Additional information about ISMPP is available by contacting the organization's Executive Director, Kimberly Goldin (phone: +1 914-945-0507; email: [kgoldin@ismpp.org](mailto:kgoldin@ismpp.org)), or online at <http://www.ismpp.org>.