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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ISMPP Reiterates Progress in Medical Publications in Response to Senator Grassley's Report

Briarcliff Manor, NY, July 19, 2010: On June 24 2010, the office of United States Senator Charles Grassley released a report entitled “**Ghostwriting in Medical Literature**” highlighting his concern “*about the lack of transparency that exists in medical ghostwriting.*” The report rightly calls for more uniform disclosure of financial and editorial support in medical publications and more specificity in acknowledging editorial assistance. However, one heading in the report states that “*the role of pharmaceutical companies in medical publications remains veiled or undisclosed.*” As evidence, it references events that predate the global ethical standards that guide the development of medical publications today.

The International Society for Medical Publication Professionals (ISMPP; www.ismpp.org) is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the medical publication profession through education and advocacy, driving integrity, excellence, and transparency in medical publications, and leading the establishment and adoption of medical publication standards and best practices. The organization shares the Senator’s goal of improving transparency in this field. “ISMPP believes full disclosure and acknowledgment of all contributions to medical publications are essential elements of ethical publication practices that ultimately protect the health and safety of patients, and maintain the integrity of our profession” states Julia Ralston, CMPP, President, ISMPP.

Guidelines relating to the development of medical publications today are driven by the ethical standards of those involved, including researchers and their institutions, journal editors and publishers, professional societies, and medical communications companies, and by stringent policies implemented by pharmaceutical companies and recently endorsed globally in the industry statement “*Joint Position on the Publication of Clinical Trial Results in the Scientific Literature*”¹. The recent article “*Good publication practice for communicating company sponsored medical research: the GPP2 guidelines*”² (GPP2) draws on current literature and guidelines from many key organizations in presenting its recommendations, and summarizes the numerous codes of practice that have been published and adopted since 2003. Many of these cornerstone guidances are absent from Senator Grassley’s report. In addition, the report focuses on publications sponsored by the pharmaceutical industry. It does not adequately address publications developed in academic settings, where some of the same issues of authorship and disclosure are apparent.

ISMPP will continue to work with industry companies, the academic community, journal editors, and other professional societies to ensure global standardization and the highest levels of integrity in practices related to medical publications.



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¹ *Joint Position on the Disclosure of Clinical Trial Information via Clinical Trial Registries and Databases* available online at www.ifpma.org/clinicaltrials
; ² *Graf et al. Good publication practice for communicating company sponsored medical research: the GPP2 guidelines. BMJ 2009;339:b4330*

About ISMPP

The International Society for Medical Publication Professionals 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 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) or online at <http://www.ismpp.org>