

UW School of Medicine gets D on conflicts of interest in nationwide scorecard

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The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health received a grade of D in the American Medical Student Association's PharmFree Scorecard released Tuesday.

The scorecard said most U.S. medical schools are failing to address conflicts of interest caused by pharmaceutical industry marketing. Only 21 of 150 medical schools surveyed by the AMSA have strong policies (those graded A or B), according to the scorecard.

The Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee got a grade of "In Process" because its policies are still under review.

Go to www.amsascorecard.org for more details.

AMSA collaborated with the Prescription Project, an industry watchdog group working to eliminate conflicts of interest in medicine, to develop a rigorous methodology and an interactive Web site that evaluates each school's policies in 11 areas. The AMSA PharmFree Scorecard offers a comprehensive look at conflict-of-interest policies across the country, as well as an in-depth, school-by-school look at policies that govern industry interaction with medical school faculty and trainees.

The AMSA PharmFree Scorecard evaluates restrictions on gifts, paid speaking for products, acceptance of drug promotion samples, interaction with sales representatives, and industry-funded education, among other criteria. Top-ranked ('A') schools included Mount Sinai School of Medicine (New York), the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (Maryland), the University of California Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine, the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, the University of California Davis School of Medicine, and the University of California San Francisco School of Medicine.

Fourteen respondents received a B (9 percent); 4 received a C (3 percent); 19 received a D (13 percent); and 60 received an F (40 percent). Schools that declined to submit policies and schools that did not respond to repeated requests for policies received an automatic F. Twenty-eight respondents received a grade of "In Process" because their policies are currently under review or revision.