



College of Respiratory
Therapists of Ontario

Ordre des thérapeutes
respiratoires de l'Ontario

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Practice FAQs

December 2021

QUESTION

The RT's at our hospital have been offered a coffee gift card for every referral to a specific home oxygen company. Is this appropriate?

ANSWER

Conflicts of Interest can be actual, potential, or perceived. A conflict of interest exists when an RT is in a position where their duty to their patient/client could be compromised, or could be perceived to be compromised, by a personal relationship or benefit.

A benefit may be described as a financial or non-financial consideration that might directly or indirectly influence, or appear to influence, an RT's professional judgment and/or objectivity.

In this scenario, it would be considered a conflict of interest as the RT's may be influenced to select a company based on direct compensation for doing so.

The CROTO recommends that if an RT is in doubt about whether a conflict of interest situation exists, it's best to err on the side of caution. Although the CROTO can provide guidance regarding conflicts of interest, the individual Respiratory Therapist is responsible for determining if an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest situation exists at the time.

The CROTO has revised the Conflict of Interest Professional Practice Guideline and it is now available for public consultation. It is linked in this e-bulletin and we welcome your thoughts!