

# Trust

The state of being responsible for someone or something.

Developmental [incentives](#) are fundamental to surgical [progress](#), yet financial and professional incentives inherently create [conflicts of interest](#) (COI). Understanding how to manage COI held by [neurosurgeons](#), [industry](#), [hospitals](#), and journal [editors](#), without thwarting [progress](#) and [innovation](#) is critical.

A [review](#) of the [literature](#) was performed to assess [conflicts of interest](#) that affect neurosurgical [innovation](#), and [review](#) ways to manage COI of various parties while adhering to [ethical standards](#).

COI are inherent to [collaboration](#) and [innovation](#), and are therefore an [unavoidable](#) component of neurosurgery. The lack of a clear distinction between clinical [practice](#) and [innovation](#), ability to use [devices](#) off-label, and unstandardized [disclosure](#) requirements create inconsistencies in the way that conflicts of interest are handled. Additionally, lack of requirements to compare innovation to the [standard of care](#) and inherent [bias](#) that affects [study design](#) and [interpretation](#) can have profound effects on the medical [literature](#). Conflicts of interest can have both direct and downstream effects on neurosurgical practice, and it is possible to manage them while improving the [quality](#) of [research](#) and [innovation](#).

Conflicts of interest are inherent to surgical [innovation](#), and can be handled in an ethically sound manner. [Neurosurgeons](#), device [companies](#), [hospitals](#), and medical [journals](#) can take steps to proactively confront [bias](#) and ensure [patient autonomy](#) and [safety](#). These steps can preserve public [trust](#) and ultimately improve [evidence](#)-based neurosurgical practice <sup>1)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>

DiRisio AC, Muskens IS, Cote DJ, Babu M, Gormley WB, Smith TR, Moojen WA, Broekman ML. Oversight and Ethical Regulation of Conflicts of Interest in Neurosurgery in the United States. *Neurosurgery*. 2019 Feb 1;84(2):305-312. doi: 10.1093/neuros/nyy227. PubMed PMID: 29850841.

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