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**Implementation Advisory Group Call Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 15, 2020**  
**3:00 p.m. Eastern**

**Participants:** Sarah Ohlhorst, American Society for Nutrition (ASN); Cathie Woteki; Rob Bertolo; Jamie Baum

**Guiding Principles for ASN Relationships with Entities at Interest**

Implementation Advisory Group members reviewed and discussed a first draft of the Guiding Principles for ASN Relationships with Entities at Interest. Group members discussed how the words relationship and partnership are used somewhat interchangeably throughout the document, while partnership is actually more of a formal agreement than a relationship. Definitions for these words will be included in a revised version of the document, along with more thought behind when and how these terms are used throughout the revised document.

Under the section titles Overview, it was suggested that the term “scientific validity” be removed from the final sentence of the second paragraph, as science is always valid. The term scientific validity was used more as a reference to ASN’s scientific reputation, but the other terms used in that sentence (objectivity, autonomy, credibility, etc.) get that point across on their own. It was also noted that a reference to the *Best Practices in Nutrition Science to Earn and Keep the Public’s Trust* report should be included as part of the definition for entities at interest, as the report is where this term was coined.

Under the section titled Guiding Principles, after the fourth bullet, it was suggested that the language “Partnerships must not bias or appear to bias...” is based on the eye of the beholder and depends on the group(s) reviewing ASN’s process for enforcement of these guiding principles. The Advisory Group decided to remove “or appear to bias” from the sentence for that reason, as it is more objective and difficult to determine and enforce.

Under the heading, ASN Involvement in Partnerships, the group discussed the need to reword the first sentence after the first bullet. The first sentence will be rewritten for more clarity and accuracy to better convey that outside funds do not influence ASN advocacy activities without overstating other points that had been included in this sentence. The second sentence after the first bullet will become its own bullet and “objective interpretation of available science” will be moved to before “prepared using a balance of member perspectives” to show its importance in the process.

After the second bullet, the term “entities at interest” will be added after ASN activities and programs.

After the third bullet, it was suggested that the word “balanced” be removed from before the term “scientific accuracy”, as this is not needed. The sub-bullet regarding sponsored satellite programs will be separated from the guiding principles document and moved to the end of the entire document with additional language noting that these programs do not generally follow the guiding principles. The language in the paragraph will also be reworded to further clarify the role of ASN with satellite programs, as the term “clear separation” is not the current portrayal. The need for complete transparency and a declaration of what these programs are and how they relate to ASN will be added to the language.

After the fourth bullet, the term “reserves the right” will be removed from in front of “publicly disclose” and changed to “ASN will publicly disclose”. A sub-bullet will also be added to note that ASN will share the agreements with entities at interest that it maintains with the ASN Relationships with Entities at Interest Advisory Group on request, and also with the independent third party which will conduct the audit of ASN’s adherence to the guiding principles.

The section titled Organizational Review will be revised to better highlight the role of the ASN Board and the ASN Foundation Board in reviewing and approving major initiatives and partnerships that ASN undertakes. Language will also be added to note that the Executive Director will consult with the ASN Relationships with Entities at Interest Advisory Group for advice on appropriate actions to take as needed.

**Action:** Sarah will share *Process Guidelines for ASN Systematic Reviews, Reports, and Papers* with the Advisory Group for additional background information, as well as other relevant background materials for ASN and ASN Board/ Foundation Board operations, policies, and disclosures currently in place.

### **Next Steps**

The next Implementation Advisory Group call will be scheduled for February and will include a representative from the American Heart Association. ASN’s conflict of interest forms will be discussed on a future call. Sarah will make all revisions discussed on the call and share a revised document with the Advisory Group for further review and discussion.