



## PReMA Guidance on Virtual Meetings

### Preamble

The purpose of this document is to provide additional interpretation and further guidance towards the relevant provisions of the PReMA Code of Practice. This Guidance is not binding by itself. It must be read with the Spirit of the Code in mind and always in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and other applicable industry codes. PReMA member companies are encouraged to take into account the considerations given in this Guidance when implementing the PReMA Code of Practice in their daily practice. The overall intention of this Guidance is that the cooperation between companies, HCPs and other stakeholders is always based on high ethical standards and clearly aims to benefit patients.

### Introduction

Collaborations between healthcare professionals and the pharmaceutical industry are essential and ensure that patients have access to the medicines they need and that healthcare professionals have up-to-date comprehensive information about the diseases they treat and the medicines they prescribe. PReMA member companies remain committed to activities that provide accurate, balanced and scientifically valid information and educational content to healthcare professionals and advance their medical knowledge and expertise. These activities may take place through various means and media.

PReMA Code of Practice set standards for industry business practices, which must be maintained in the virtual setting. In response to PReMA member companies, PReMA is issuing this Guidance on Virtual Meetings, commencing in August 2020. This provisional guidance may be amended to take into consideration concrete experience occurring in the coming weeks/months. To the extent Thai laws, regulations, or industry codes of practice differ, PReMA member companies should adhere to requirements established in Thailand.

### Purpose

This Guidance is intended to clarify requirements for Virtual Meetings which have been moved to a purely virtual format. Specifically

1. Virtual International Meetings,
2. Virtual National Meetings organized by Healthcare Organization (Medical Associations/ Societies Hospitals), and
3. Virtual Pharmaceutical Company-organized Meetings

### Definitions

Virtual Meeting is a meeting to exchange scientific or educational information where the activities are virtual interactions with HCP participants in different places. The virtual interactions with HCP(s) may take place in-country (National) or cross-border (International) for both legitimate promotional and non-promotional purposes which should be identified and documented.

- A **Virtual International Meeting** is an international meeting where the activities are virtual/digital and involve HCP(s) and participants are in different places or countries with or without an in-person event linked to it.
- A **Virtual National Meeting** is a virtual meeting organized by a Healthcare Organization (Medical Associations/ Societies Hospitals) with and (an) HCP(s) and participants are in different place of Thailand with or without an in-person event linked to it.
- A **Virtual Pharmaceutical Company-organized Meeting** is a meeting organized by a PReMA member company with and (an) HCP(s) with or without an in-person event linked to it.

- **A Virtual Exhibition Booth/Exhibition** is an area in the context of a virtual meeting where pharmaceutical companies (and other organizations) can virtually display their product materials to delegates in the commercial booth and/or their scientific material in the virtual medical exhibition space.
- **A Healthcare Professional (HCP)** means any member of the medical, dental, pharmacy or nursing professions or any other person who in the course of his or her professional activities may prescribe, recommend, purchase, supply, or administer a pharmaceutical product and those as defined under current Drugs Act, in context of PReMA code, including government officers who review and approve pharmaceutical products
- **Healthcare Organization (HCO)** means an entity that provides healthcare, which is not an individual Healthcare Professional, but may be a group of Healthcare Professionals. Examples are hospitals, clinics, medical schools or universities, group practices, laboratories, including medical society who is independent association of medical or scientific professionals organized to promote medical or scientific knowledge and advances.

## Scope

The Guidance is intended to cover the activities organized by PReMA member companies or hosted by healthcare organizations and supported by PReMA member companies in 3 areas as follows:

1. Support of virtual meetings, and symposium
2. Support of materials used before and during virtual congresses, meetings, and symposium
3. Support of virtual exhibition booth
4. Meals & refreshment during virtual meetings and symposium

### 1. Support of virtual meetings, and symposium

*Article 7.2 and Article 7.3 of the PReMA Code of Practice*

- A support of virtual meetings and symposium organized either by companies directly or by third parties, providing funding to assist in the medical education of HCPs, sponsorships to medical societies organizing events, hiring of exhibition space, support of speakers, etc. These activities are covered by PReMA Code of Practice. The requirements were originally drafted for in-person meetings but apply similarly to virtual meetings.
- The prime reason for attendees to participate in such meetings should be the scientific or educational value. In determining whether to support a virtual event, consideration should be given to the educational program, overall cost, nature of the audience, and cybersecurity and privacy arrangements.
- PReMA member companies might find it helpful to clearly document the reasons as to why they decide to support a virtual meeting, and symposium.
- PReMA member companies (with the support of the third party organizing the virtual meetings and symposium) implement processes to ensure that the HCO's virtual platforms enable to categorize the participants (HCPs/Non-HCPs), e.g. via a pop-up asking the participant to confirm his/her status.

### 2. Support of materials used before and during virtual meetings, and symposium

*Article 4, Article 5, and Article 6 of the PReMA Code of Practice*

- The electronic communication tools are referring to emails and mobile application such as LINE, WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.
- All materials used before and during virtual meetings and symposium can be exhibited and provided to HCPs via electronic tools only when they are complied with or approved by the FDA, in terms of the content and distribution in electronic channel.
- The company should establish a process and control to
  - verify HCP personal data to ensure that such materials will be provided to the specific recipient (targeted HCP).
  - obtain consent or permission from the recipient before sending such materials.

### **3. A Virtual Exhibition Booth**

#### *Article 7.1 of the PReMA Code of Practice*

- The materials used before and during virtual exhibition booth must be complied with section 2 (Support of materials used before and during virtual meetings and symposium)
- PReMA member companies (with the support of the third party organizing the virtual exhibition booth) implement processes to ensure that the HCOs' virtual platforms enable to categorize the participants (HCPs/Non-HCPs), e.g. via a pop-up asking the participant to confirm his/her status.

### **4. Meals & Refreshment during virtual meetings and symposium**

#### *Article 7.2 of the PReMA Code of Practice*

- Meals must never be provided to secure an improper advantage (e.g. gaining access)
- Meals to be provided only in official office (not home office)/institution/hospital settings; meals cannot be delivered to HCP's homes or any other location outside the official office/hospital/appropriate meeting venue setting.
- Meal delivery cannot be provided to individual HCP in a one-on-one virtual meeting or discussion between HCP and the company representative.
- Meal delivery may be provided to speaker or presenter (fees-for-service-arrangement) during the virtual meeting when the broadcast location or venue organized by the company or HCO other than the speaker's premise.
- Meals may be provided to a group of HCPs attending the virtual meetings or symposium organized by PReMA member companies when such meetings are pre-setting with specific agenda and held at the hospitals or at the appropriate meeting venue setting. The virtual meetings or symposium may be, for example, product presentation by company representative or scientific lecture by external expert (speaker).