Statement on Pfizer’s Recent Policy Change on CME Support

As of July 2, 2008, Pfizer began implementing changes associated with our recent policy announcement regarding CME support. While we have received many accolades from academic and organized medicine for this change, we also recognize the questions and concerns this has raised for some groups. In addition, to updated Frequently Asked Questions (www.Pfizermededgrants.com), we are providing this statement for the medical education community to elaborate on media communications in order to clarify the basis upon which the decision was made.

By taking this action, Pfizer is reaffirming its strong commitment to support CME. We are committed to supporting CME and independent education initiatives that are most likely to improve patient health, and believe that the likelihood of improving patient health increases when education is integrated with quality. We believe commercial support should be aligned with the literature on effective continuing education for health professionals, and the highest level of standards endorsed by the medical community such as those found in the new ACCME criteria. This reflects the new vision for CME as a key strategy to address real practice concerns in the context of practice. Therefore, we believe that patients are best served when commercial support is provided to those organizations that are engaged in patient care or represent those who deliver patient care. These organizations are in the best position to achieve the highest recognized standards of quality in the medical profession today. We will continue to support proposals that include services from other stakeholder groups as we believe many of these organizations provide a valuable and often essential supportive role that is valued by the medical profession.

In addition, we continue to believe that all organization types and proposals need to be assessed for conflict of interest management in order to ensure independence from commercial influence. This includes full implementation of the Standards for Commercial Support, and avoiding any organizational structure where CME is designed so that financial incentives potentially overshadow patient health concerns.

We remain committed to transparency and communicating our standards in whatever forums best serve the public interest, and continue to support the active dialog with all stakeholder groups that we have supported in the past.