



Healthcare
Improvement
Scotland

Evidence
Advice, guidance
and intelligence

Frequently asked questions and examples of interests to assist with declarations of interest for the Evidence Directorate

Context

This document is a complement to “Declarations of interest: definitions and policies for handling of interests at meetings” which includes relevant definitions and categories of interests.

The following document contains examples of questions asked by people who have previously declared interests before assisting with the work of the Evidence Directorate of Healthcare Improvement Scotland. This document is divided into sections. The first covers health conditions and how these should be considered when making declarations. The second section answers questions most often asked by people declaring for the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) and the third section answers questions most often asked by people declaring for the Scottish Health Technologies Group (SHTG). The questions in the second and third sections, and the answers provided, are not exclusive to the SMC or SHTG and may be applicable to other units within the Evidence Directorate.

Questions regarding health conditions and these should be considered when making declarations

Q1: I am a staff member with a health condition, should I be declaring this in my *annual* declaration of interests?

A1: No. Under no circumstances should you declare details about your health in your *annual* declarations.

Q2: I am a staff member who has been asked to work on a project which is directly related to a health condition that I have, or someone close to me has, is this an interest?

A2: This is only an interest if you feel you could not be objective, or it could be perceived that your objectivity could be called into question. If you think this is the case you should raise this with your line manager. See sections 23–25 of the Healthcare Improvement Scotland employee code of conduct for further guidance.

Q3: I am member of either a permanent or temporary group and I have (or someone close to me has) a health condition which is relevant to an agenda item, is this an interest? If this is an interest how should I declare it?

A3: **Relevant** health conditions to a topic are an interest. These are *specific, personal, non-financial* interests.

- *Specific*, because it is directly related to the topic
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Non-financial*, because it does not involve anything of monetary value

There are two ways to declare this. Either verbally at the start of the meeting, or, if this is something which you do not wish to declare in a semi-public forum you should contact the chair, vice-chair or programme manager to declare this interest ahead of the meeting.



If you declare this verbally at a meeting that you have *specific, personal, non-financial interest* when asked for the nature of the interest you should only say, 'Of a health related nature.' You do not need to provide any further details of the interest. You will not be asked for any further details and the phrase 'Of a health related nature' will not appear in the published register of interests.

If you wish to declare this to the chair, vice-chair or programme manager ahead of a meeting you should make them aware that you have a '*specific, personal, non-financial interest* of a health related nature.' You will not be asked for any further details.

Q4: I have been asked to provide input into a project – peer review, provide expert opinion, provide lived experience, join a SIGN of Standards group – and I have the health condition that is being considered, is this an interest?

A4: Yes a **relevant** health condition is an interest. It is a *specific, personal, non-financial* interest.

- *Specific*, because it is directly related to the topic
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Non-financial*, because it does not involve anything of monetary value

When completing the form under 'nature of interest' please state 'Of a health related nature.' You do not need to provide any further details and the phrase 'Of a health related nature' will not appear in any published register of interests if you do provide input into a project.

Questions most often asked by people declaring for the Scottish Medicines Consortium

Q1. I was paid to participate on an Advisory Board for the medicine under review six years ago, does the personal interest still apply?

A1: No. This interest has lapsed because it is longer than 3 years ago. (note that *specific, personal* interests as a result of significant involvement in the development of a product, or through authorship of a core publication on the product, never lapse).

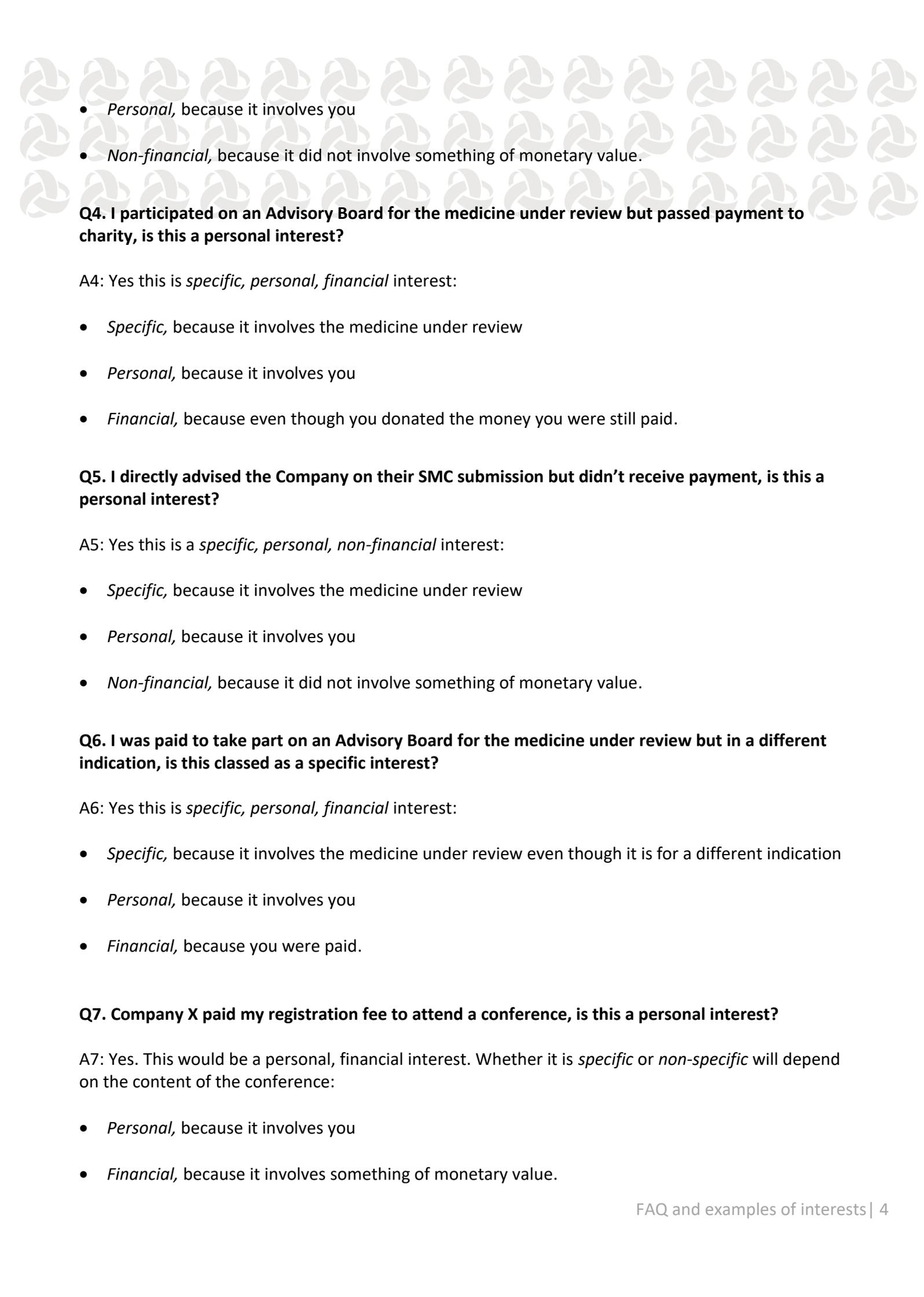
Q2. What constitutes a significant involvement in the development of a product?

A2: This includes pre-clinical and clinical development e.g. being a Chief or Co-Chief Investigator of a clinical trial or being paid to provide scientific advice.

Q3. I participated on an Advisory Board for the medicine under review but didn't receive/accept payment, is this a personal interest?

A3: Yes this is a *specific, personal, non-financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it involves the medicine under review

- 
- *Personal*, because it involves you
 - *Non-financial*, because it did not involve something of monetary value.

Q4. I participated on an Advisory Board for the medicine under review but passed payment to charity, is this a personal interest?

A4: Yes this is *specific, personal, financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it involves the medicine under review
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Financial*, because even though you donated the money you were still paid.

Q5. I directly advised the Company on their SMC submission but didn't receive payment, is this a personal interest?

A5: Yes this is a *specific, personal, non-financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it involves the medicine under review
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Non-financial*, because it did not involve something of monetary value.

Q6. I was paid to take part on an Advisory Board for the medicine under review but in a different indication, is this classed as a specific interest?

A6: Yes this is *specific, personal, financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it involves the medicine under review even though it is for a different indication
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Financial*, because you were paid.

Q7. Company X paid my registration fee to attend a conference, is this a personal interest?

A7: Yes. This would be a personal, financial interest. Whether it is *specific* or *non-specific* will depend on the content of the conference:

- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Financial*, because it involves something of monetary value.

Q8. I attended a conference sponsored by a number of companies and received travel expenses/hospitality from my department, do I need to declare an interest?

A8: No.

Q9. I attended a conference satellite meeting in relation to the medicine under review, is this a personal interest?

A9: This could be an interest from two variables. If **either** the content of the meeting was on the medicine under review **or** if expenses were provided by the company then this would be an interest.

If the content of the satellite meeting was on the medicine under review then this would make any interest *specific*. If it was not then it would be *non-specific*.

If the company provided you with expenses/hospitality then this would be a *financial* interest, if they did not then it would be *non-financial* interest.

If an interest is being declared in this instance it will be *personal*.

Q10. I have a *specific, personal* interest in a medicine that is a direct competitor to the product under review, should I declare this?

A10: Yes.

Q11. I am a SMC clinical expert and have a *specific, personal* interest in the medicine under review, will my responses be considered by SMC?

A11: No.

Q12. After what time period do interests lapse?

A12:

- *Personal, financial* interests lapse after 3 years (unless they relate to development of the medicine under review in which case they never lapse)
- *Non-personal, financial* interests lapse after 1 year
- *Non-financial* interests never lapse regardless of whether they are *specific/non-specific* or *personal/non-personal*.

Q13. I am a member of SMC/NDC and have a *specific, personal* interest in the medicine under review, can I take part in proceedings?

A13: Members with a *specific, personal* interests do not participate in SMC discussion. They should withdraw from meeting table to the designated area within meeting room and are not eligible to vote (if applicable). This is the same if the interest is *financial* or *non-financial*.

Questions most often asked by people declaring for the Scottish Health Technologies Group

Q1. I work or my partner works/has consulted for/ or been paid for service by the manufacturer but have not worked on the product. Is this an interest?

A1: Yes this is a *non-specific, personal, financial* interest:

- *Non-specific*, as you have not worked directly on the product under review
- *Personal*, because it concerns you or your partner
- *Financial*, because it involves money.

N.B. if the company only has one product then this will be a specific interest.

Q2. I work or my partner works/has consulted for/ or been paid for service by the manufacturer and have worked on the product. Is this an interest?

A2: Yes this is a *specific, personal, financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it involves the product under review
- *Personal*, because it involves you or your partner
- *Financial*, because it involves money.

Q3. I have published either primary evidence, secondary evidence, written a narrative review, or made public statements on the product. Is this an interest?

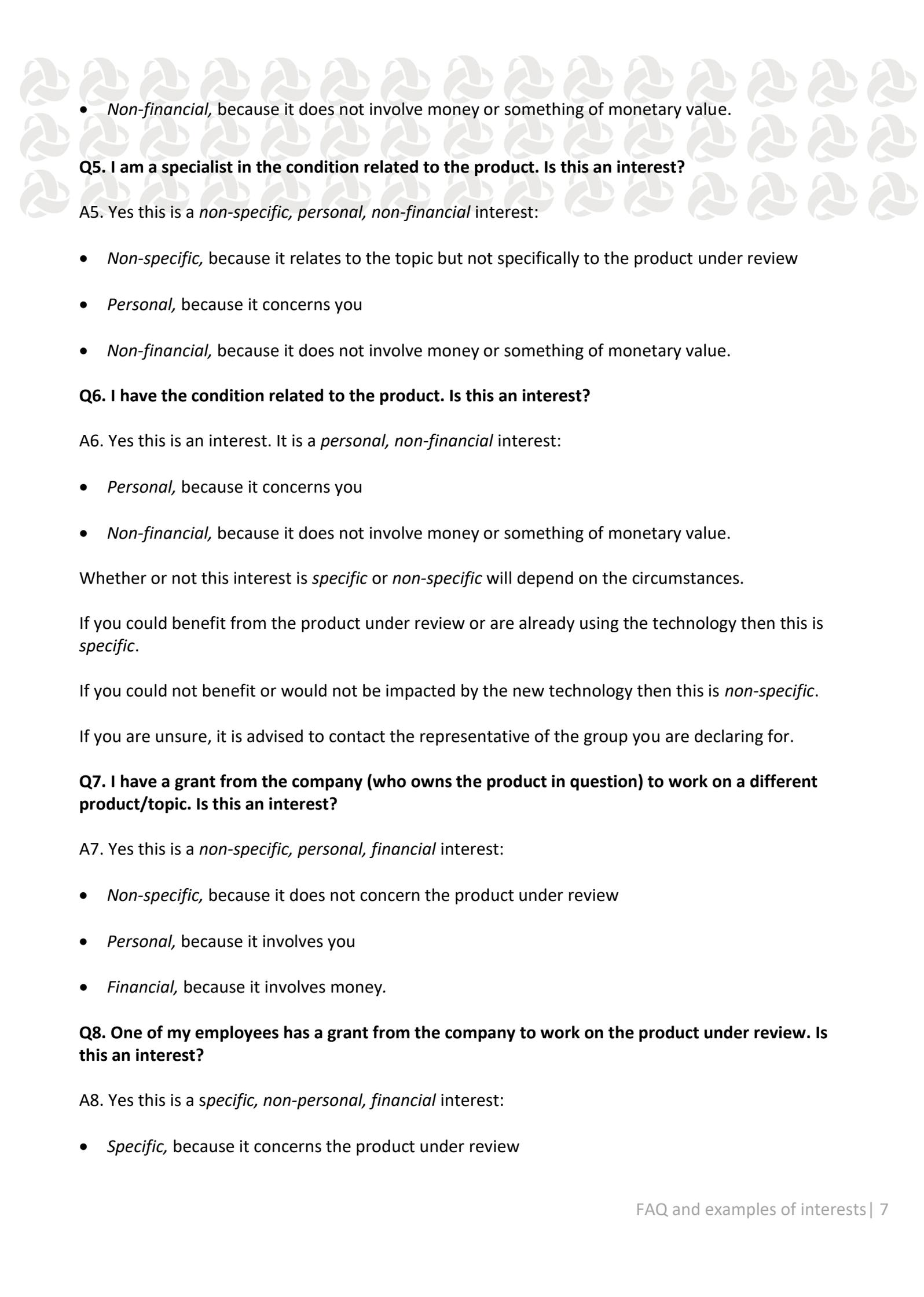
A3: Yes this is a *specific, personal, non-financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it involves the product under review
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Non-financial*, because it does not involve money or something of monetary value.

Q4. I have published epidemiology/narrative review/made public statements on the condition or general topic area but not on the product. Is this an interest?

A4: yes this is a *non-specific, personal, non-financial* interest:

- *Non-specific*, because it does not relate specifically to the product under review
- *Personal*, because it involves you

- 
- *Non-financial*, because it does not involve money or something of monetary value.

Q5. I am a specialist in the condition related to the product. Is this an interest?

A5. Yes this is a *non-specific, personal, non-financial* interest:

- *Non-specific*, because it relates to the topic but not specifically to the product under review
- *Personal*, because it concerns you
- *Non-financial*, because it does not involve money or something of monetary value.

Q6. I have the condition related to the product. Is this an interest?

A6. Yes this is an interest. It is a *personal, non-financial* interest:

- *Personal*, because it concerns you
- *Non-financial*, because it does not involve money or something of monetary value.

Whether or not this interest is *specific* or *non-specific* will depend on the circumstances.

If you could benefit from the product under review or are already using the technology then this is *specific*.

If you could not benefit or would not be impacted by the new technology then this is *non-specific*.

If you are unsure, it is advised to contact the representative of the group you are declaring for.

Q7. I have a grant from the company (who owns the product in question) to work on a different product/topic. Is this an interest?

A7. Yes this is a *non-specific, personal, financial* interest:

- *Non-specific*, because it does not concern the product under review
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Financial*, because it involves money.

Q8. One of my employees has a grant from the company to work on the product under review. Is this an interest?

A8. Yes this is a *specific, non-personal, financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because it concerns the product under review

- *Non-personal*, because it does not involve you directly
- *Financial*, because it involves money.

N.B. If your name is on the grant then this is a *personal* interest.

Q9. One of my employees has a grant from the company (who manufacture the product under review) to work on a different product. Is this an interest?

A9. Yes this is a *non-specific, non-personal, financial* interest:

- *Non-specific*, because it does not concern the product under review
- *Non-personal*, because it does not involve you directly
- *Financial*, because it involves money.

Q10. I have had conference expenses/hospitality paid for by company that manufactures the product in question. Do I need to declare this?

A10. Yes this is a *personal, financial* interest:

- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Financial*, because it involves something of monetary value.

Whether this is a *specific* or *non-specific* interest will depend on the conference, for example was it a general conference sponsored by many companies or was a conference to launch a product? See Appendix A in definitions document for further details.

Q11. I have a financial interest in a company that makes a competing product. Do I need to declare this?

A11. Yes this is a *specific, personal, financial* interest:

- *Specific*, because if the product under review were not to be approved you could gain from the success of the competing product
- *Personal*, because it involves you
- *Financial*, because it involves money.