

PORTRAYALS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Helping patients make sense of data

Charles Ornstein
ProPublica



First, what is ProPublica?

- New York-based independent, non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest
- Our reporting uncovers abuses of power and betrayals of the public trust
- Opened in 2008; staff of about 40 journalists
- Published more than 80 deep-dive stories in 2012 with more than 25 different media partners



Tackling hidden areas of medicine

- What drug companies pay health professionals, why they do it and what they get in return
- What doctors prescribe and how they compare to their peers

We wanted to take the discussion beyond the statistics in medical journals to individual doctors and their motivations.

Dollars for Docs

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Dollars for Docs

How Industry Dollars Reach Your Doctors

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By Jeremy B. Merrill, Charles Ornstein, Tracy Weber, Sisi Wei and Dan Nguyen, ProPublica, Updated March 11, 2013

Drug companies have long kept secret details of the payments they make to doctors and other health professionals for promoting their drugs. But 15 companies have begun publishing the information, some because of legal settlements. Use this tool to search for payments. [Read more about the data »](#)

Has Your Health Professional Received Drug Company Money?

Example searches: [Klein](#), [Duke University](#), [Miami](#) [More options +](#)

With 2 million records, this database represents:

 **\$2 billion**
in disclosed payments

 **15**
companies

 **~ 47%**
of total market share

Our Stories

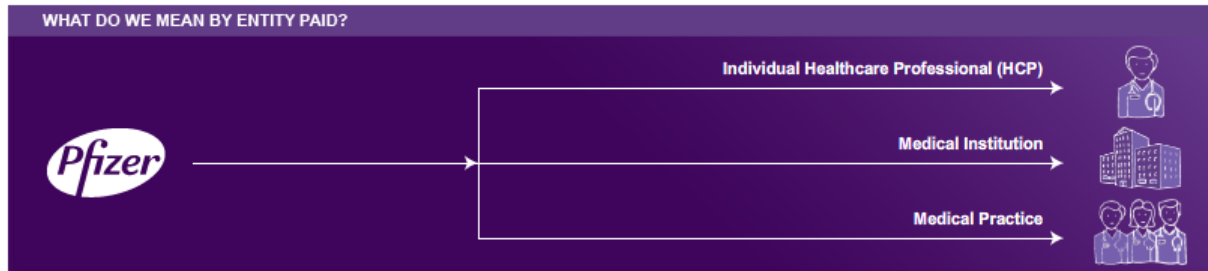


Dollars for Docs: The Top Earners

<http://projects.propublica.org/docdollars>

How companies report the info

Payments to Health Care Professionals



Payments Data by Entity Paid (Jan 1, 2011 - Sep 30, 2011) Last Updated on 02/24/2012

[How to Search this Report](#)

2011 Q3 YTD Health Care Professionals Payments Disclosure Report [Contact us online](#) or at 800-511-2727

[Provider Lookup](#)

Select a different

Alphabetic

Pages:

Page 1

Viewing all Entities

Entity Paid

3-D MEDICAL SERVICES

A & A PAIN INSTITUTE

Provider Lookup

Search for a specific Healthcare Professional (HCP) or Principal Investigator (PI).

* First Name:

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

City:

* State:

OR

Search for a specific Entity Name.

* Entity Name:

City:

* State:

* Required

Cancel

Search

Total received by: A & A PAIN INSTITUTE INC

\$5,202

No two companies are alike

 Fees Paid to US Based Healthcare Professionals for Consulting & Speaking Services 1st Quarter through 3rd Quarter 2011					
Health Care Professional	Location	Payee Name	Consultant	Speaker	Total Fees
Aaron, Michael	TOMS RIVER, NJ	Michael R Aaron		\$1,250	\$1,250
Abbate, Samuel	WASILLA, AK	Adonal Diabetes and Endocrinology Center		\$1,750	\$1,750
Abboud, Maha	OAK LAWN, IL	Diabetes, Osteoporosis, Obesity, S.C.		\$10,000	\$10,000
Abcarian, Herand	CHICAGO, IL	Herand Abcarian MD SC		\$5,000	\$5,000
Abdullah, Ghazanfar	BRONX, NY	HIV Primary Care, PC		\$1,500	\$1,500
Abela, George	EAST LANSING, MI	George S Abela		\$13,000	\$13,000
Abeles, Micha	MERIDEN, CT	Micha Abeles		\$1,500	\$1,500
Abell, Bruce	WASHINGTON, DC	Bruce M Abell		\$29,500	\$29,500
Abott, Michael	BROOKLYN, NY	Michael Abott		\$9,500	\$9,500
Abraham, George	WORCESTER, MA	George M Abraham		\$7,000	\$7,000
Abrahams, Roger	MORGANTOWN, WV	Roger A. Abrahams, Md		\$8,750	\$8,750
Abrahamson, Martin	BOSTON, MA	Martin J Abrahamson		\$400	\$400
Abramovits, William	DALLAS, TX	Dermatology Treatment & Research Center PA		\$5,000	\$5,000
Abrams, Charles	PHILADELPHIA, PA	CHARLES S ABRAMS MD	\$900		\$900
Abromowitz, Howard	DAYTON, OH	Howard B Abromowitz		\$1,200	\$1,200

The companies in our database



Data in service of stories

The Story So Far

Feature Stories

Financial Ties Bind Medical Societies to Drug and Device Makers

Docs on Pharma Payroll Have Blemished Records, Limited Credentials

Med Schools Flunk at Keeping Faculty Off Pharma Speaking Circuit

News App: Dollars for Docs



Docs on Pharma Payroll Have Blemished Records, Limited Credentials

by Charles Ornstein, Tracy Weber and Dan Nguyen, ProPublica - Oct. 18, 2010

Hundreds of doctors paid by pharmaceutical companies to promote their drugs have been accused of professional misconduct, were disciplined by state boards or lacked credentials as researchers or specialists, ProPublica has found. [More »](#)



Stanford University Medical Center



Not enforcing policies

Med Schools Flunk at Keeping Faculty Off Pharma Speaking Circuit



Stanford University's Hoover Tower / Getty Images file photo

by [Tracy Weber](#) and [Charles Ornstein](#)
ProPublica, Dec. 19, 2010, 10:04 p.m.

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As medical schools wrestle with how to keep drug companies from corrupting their faculties, Stanford University is often lauded for its tough stance.

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[f](#) Enable Social Reading

A case study: Heart Rhythm Society

Click on a company's logo to see what they sponsored at the Heart Rhythm Society's 2010 conference:

**Boston
Scientific**

Johnson+Johnson



sanofi aventis



ST. JUDE MEDICAL
MORE CONTROL. LESS RISK.

Spending: Shuttle bus ads

St. Jude, Inc.

\$50,000

Medtronic

\$50,000

Boston Scientific

\$50,000

Boehringer Ingelheim

\$12,500

Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Total: \$162,500

[See table listing](#)



Shuttle bus ads
\$162,500



CONVENTION



What we found



Santa Monica pain physician Gerald Sacks has earned at least \$730,000 giving promotional talks and consulting for four companies since 2009, according to Dollars for Docs.

Sacks, an anesthesiologist, isn't a leader in prominent pain medicine societies, and several top pain physicians told us they hadn't heard of him. He doesn't work in an academic medical center such as UCLA or USC. He hasn't published much research. We tried to talk to him about what he was paid for, but he didn't return numerous messages.

What we found



Dr. Jon W. Draud, the medical director of psychiatric and addiction medicine at two Tennessee hospitals, pursues some eclectic passions. He's bred sleek Basenji hunting dogs for show. And last summer, the Tennessee State Museum featured "African Art: The Collection of Jon Draud."

But the Nashville psychiatrist is also notable for a professional pursuit: During the last four years, the 47-year-old Draud has earned more than \$1 million for delivering promotional talks and consulting for seven drug companies.

Searching for a doctor



Dollars for Docs

How Industry Dollars Reach Your Doctors

Tweet 289

Like 12k

149 Disclosures Found for Payments to "Duke University"

Jump to: [Important notes about this list.](#)

Has Your Health Professional Received Drug Company Money?

Name

State

Duke University

All States

SEARCH

Example searches: [Klein](#), [Duke University](#), [Miami](#)

[More options +](#)

1 2 3 [Next →](#)

☒ Show only payments over \$250

Name / Payee	City	State	Company	Year	Category	Amount
ASHWIN A. PATKAR (Payee: DUKE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY)	DURHAM	N.C.	Forest	2012	Research	\$3,752
ASHWIN PATKAR (Payee: DUKE UNIVERSITY)	DURHAM	N.C.	Forest	2012	Research	\$71,080
Megan Clowse (Payee: Duke University Medical Center)	Durham	N.C.	Cephalon	2012	Research	\$48,285
DUKE UNIVERSITY	DURHAM	N.C.	Allergan	2012	Combination	\$2,080,001-2,090,000
DUKE UNIVERSITY CLINICAL RESEARCH SUPPORT OFFICE HOCK PLAZA	Durham	N.C.	AstraZeneca	2012	Research	\$214,500
DUKE UNIVERSITY GENERAL ACCT DUKE CLINICAL RESEARCH INST	Durham	N.C.	AstraZeneca	2012	Research	\$3,192,923
DUKE UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOCK PLAZA	Durham	N.C.	AstraZeneca	2012	Research	\$9,000
G. Ralph Corey (Payee: Duke University Medical Center)	BAHAMA	N.C.	GlaxoSmithKline	2012	Speaking	\$400

Payment detail page

PAYMENT DISCLOSURE

DUKE UNIVERSITY

\$71,080

paid by **Forest** »

Listed practitioner: **ASHWIN PATKAR**

Location: **DURHAM, N.C.**

Payment for: **Research** ⓘ

Reported: **April to June 2012 Research**

Notable drugs produced by Forest include:

Lexapro (depression, generalized anxiety disorder)

Namenda (alzheimer's, moderate to severe dementia)

Bystolic (hypertension)

Savella (fibromyalgia)

Viibryd (depression)

Celexa (depression)

Daliresp (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)

[See the company's complete list »](#)

Important notes



Research payments are distinct from speaking and consulting. The figure listed does not reflect the actual compensation received by the physician listed as the principal investigator.

Payments for clinical studies may include costs associated with patient care, supplies, as well as the time spent by health care professionals treating patients and managing the study.

The reports include both the name of the health provider who performed the service and, when reported, the entity paid. They may be different.

Source: Forest. ProPublica last downloaded this record on Oct. 17, 2012.

Payment detail page



Dollars for Docs

How Industry Dollars Reach Your Doctors

PAYMENT DISCLOSURE

DUKE UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

\$2,000

paid by **Pfizer** »

Listed practitioner: **DAVID WILLIAM ZALTS**

Location: **DURHAM, N.C.**

Payment for: **Expert-led forums** ⓘ

Reported: **Jan. to Dec. 2010**

Expert-Led Forums

Doctors and other healthcare professionals work with Pfizer as expert speakers to educate their peers about a health condition or one of our medicines.

Click to see the data.

Notable drugs produced by Pfizer include:

Lipitor (cholesterol)

Lyrica (epilepsy, post-herpetic neuralgia and diabetic peripheral neuropathy, fibromyalgia)

Celebrex (arthritis pain and inflammation, acute pain)

Viagra (erectile dysfunction)

Important notes

Our reports include both the name of the health provider who performed the service and, when reported, the entity paid. They may be different.

Source: Pfizer. ProPublica last downloaded this record on Nov. 28, 2012.

Personalized checklist for patients



Dollars for Docs

How Industry Dollars Reach Your Doctors

Talking With Your Doctor About Pharmaceutical Company Payments

Preparing for Your Conversation

ProPublica's Dollars for Docs database lets people search for payments to healthcare professionals made by 15 pharmaceutical companies, which account for about 47 percent of U.S. drug sales. The database includes the following payment record:

Payee: **DRAUD, JON WINSTON**

Amount paid: **\$95,500**

Company paying: **Novartis**

Payment for: **Speaking fees**

Payment description: Merck does not provide detailed descriptions of its categories.

Listed practitioner: **JON WINSTON DRAUD**

Location: **MURFREESBORO, Tenn.**

Reported: **2011 Oct. to 2012 Sept.**



Send this link to your doctor

If your doctor would like a link to this payment information in our database, we've generated a QR code they can scan with a smartphone to go directly to the payment record. Or if they want a link to type in, send them to <http://propub.ca/15jxhYS>.



More of the checklist

Things to keep in mind before speaking to your doctor

- Many healthcare professionals in our database have similar names, so you should start by asking your doctor if the person mentioned in this payment record is really him/her.
- Pharmaceutical companies make payments for many reasons, from research to speaking to consulting. They payments are legal, but studies show they can influence a doctor's prescribing decisions.
- Your doctor may not know he or she is listed in Dollars for Docs, especially if the payments are small.

Questions to Ask

Questions you might want to ask your healthcare professional

- ☐ What are the specific circumstances of this payment?
- ☐ What is your current relationship with this drug company?
- ☐ What drugs have you prescribed me that are manufactured by companies you've taken payments from?
- ☐ Are there non-drug alternatives that I may want to consider first?
- ☐ Are there less expensive generic alternatives to the drugs you have prescribed?

For additional information on Novartis's notable drugs

Cataflam (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0009918/>)

Clozaril (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0009695/>)

Diovan/Co-Diovan (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0012598/>)

Exelon/Exelon Patch (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0001593/>)

Exforge (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0008958/>)

Gilenya (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0010304/>)

Gleevec (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0010674/>)

Reclast/Aclasta (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0012716/>)

Creating a national conversation



Keep the conversation going

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