

## HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL POLICY ON ACCEPTANCE OF TOBACCO RELATED RESEARCH FUNDING

The issue of whether or not to accept research funding from entities that derive their funding from tobacco-related sales has been under consideration by many academic and health care institutions, including Harvard Medical School and its affiliated institutions. There are persuasive arguments on both sides of the question. On the one hand, acceptance of such funding without question raises serious public health and public responsibility issues. On the other hand, prohibiting such funding has the potential of depriving researchers and society of a funding source for addressing important non-tobacco related research questions. However, balancing those competing considerations in light of the harm that has been caused by the tobacco industry and its products, and considering HMS's mission as a leader in teaching, research and patient care, the School is instituting a policy to prohibit the acceptance of funding for research or other purposes. This prohibition will apply to funding from companies that make or market tobacco products or from entities supported by such companies such as the Council for Tobacco Research or the Smokeless Tobacco Research Council.

Research Funding Through HMS – Effective July 1, 2004, HMS will not submit any new proposals for research to the tobacco related entities described above. Individuals who currently have funding from tobacco related entities will be permitted to apply for non-competing renewal of such research funding but the application must be reviewed and approved prior to submission by the Dean for Basic Sciences and Graduate Studies. Among the criteria to be considered by the Dean in reviewing such a proposal for renewal are the following:

- the scientific merit of the question to be addressed;
- the relationship of the scientific aim/purpose of the funding in relation to the funding entity;
- the existence of any constraints on academic freedom;
- the use the funder might make of the results (e.g. publicity, marketing);
- the potential that the funder will use the relationship with HMS as an endorsement.

Research Funding Through Affiliated Institutions – Some HMS affiliated institutions have established policies related to the acceptance of tobacco-related funding; others have not. Affiliated institutions are strongly encouraged to consider the issue formally and to promulgate policies that are, at a minimum, consistent with the HMS policy.