



Mr Mike Brady
Campaigns and Networking Coordinator
Baby Milk Action
34 Trumpington Street
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United Kingdom

August 8th, 2013
PA/MCM

Dear Mr Brady,

Thank you for your letter dated June 26th 2013, to which you attached the report of the Baby Feeding Law Group (BFLG) dated April 9th 2013, as well as sharing your concerns with us regarding the UK.

Firstly, allow me to reiterate that Nestlé believes breastfeeding is the ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants. Therefore we support the WHO's recommendation for exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, followed by the introduction of adequate nutritious complementary foods, along with sustained breastfeeding for up to two years or beyond. When, in consultation with their healthcare providers, mothers and families have determined that optimal breastfeeding is not possible, infant formula plays a vital role in providing essential nutrients to infants. It is the only suitable BMS recognised by the WHO. As such, Nestlé is strongly committed to the responsible marketing of infant foods and this includes our marketing of SMA-branded products in the UK.

Secondly, we would like to point out that the information contained in the BFLG report pertains to a period that preceded the acquisition of Pfizer Nutrition by Nestlé on November 30th 2012. In reference to the letter you sent us on February 13th 2013 to which we responded on March 8th 2013, we confirmed we would comply with the two rulings issued in 2012 by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in relation to Pfizer Nutrition.

Regarding the SMA Medical Education events programme, we seek to run it in accordance with the aim and principles of the WHO Code. It had been run by Pfizer for a number of years. Contrary to what your letter suggests, Nestlé has neither introduced nor increased this activity since acquiring the Pfizer business.

The WHO Code does not preclude the dissemination of information to health professionals as per Article 6.2. Given that there are unfortunately still numerous barriers to breastfeeding, including a lack of a supportive environment and inadequate maternity legislation, health care professionals play a key role in providing parents with objective health and nutrition advice for infants and young children.

Health care professionals have continually told us they really value this service; particularly at a time when access to training is not always available to them. Healthcare professionals themselves often requested the topics covered by these events, based on their specific needs for up-to-date scientific information. Expert speakers convey the information during these educational events, giving health care professionals access to the latest evidence on maternal and infant health.

Since the acquisition of Pfizer was finalised, we have conducted a thorough review of these meetings to ensure that the content is delivered in accordance with article 4.2 and 7.2 of the WHO Code as well as national regulations. If product information is provided at an event, this is declared upfront on the agenda, which always accompanies the invitation. We also ensure that this information is factual, scientific and evidence-based, as per Article 7.2 of the WHO Code. The material provided at these events does not imply or create the belief that bottle-feeding is equivalent or superior to breastfeeding. We are delivering this educational service without compromising anyone's independence.

Your letter also makes reference to our informational programme for pregnant mothers. The SMA programme is a service to support mothers through their pregnancy and following the birth of their baby. It is a well-established programme that has been running for some time. The information has been developed with subject matter experts and covers on a wide range of issues. Mothers are clearly informed that the best way to feed a baby is to breastfeed and the advantages of doing so. Risks associated with the use of breastmilk substitutes are also openly stated. Mothers need to first read information about the importance of breastfeeding and voluntarily agree that SMA Nutrition is supplying information at their individual request and for educational purposes only. We pay careful attention that the information we provide promotes optimal child nutrition and does not in any way undermine breastfeeding.

We rigorously make sure that our marketing practices in the UK are in accordance with the regulatory framework set by the EU Directive on Infant and Follow-on Formulae, the UK Regulations 2007 and the Guidance Notes 2009.

Mr Brady, we appreciate your interest for the good health of mothers and children as well as your careful attention to the responsible marketing of breastmilk substitutes. We encourage you to continue to share with us your concerns about our company's practices.

Yours sincerely,

Marie Chantal Messier, RD
Public Affairs Manager
Nestlé S.A.