



Breastfeeding and breast milk substitutes

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POSITION STATEMENT

ACNN supports the aim of the World Health Organization *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*¹ to promote and protect breastfeeding as the best form of nutrition for all infants, in particular the sick and/or preterm infants admitted to neonatal units. ACNN also supports the Australian response to the WHO code, the Marketing in Australia of Infant Formulas (MAIF) Agreement, as updated in 2016.²

As health professionals, neonatal nurses must provide consistent, objective advice to mothers on the value of supplying breast milk as the best available nutrition for their infants. Mothers should receive breastfeeding support from neonatal nurses and, where available, lactation consultants.

Mothers' feeding preferences and decisions must take place within the context of being fully informed on all aspects, including the best available nutritional alternative.³ Mothers choosing to not breastfeed and mothers supplementing low breast milk supply must also receive education on the proper use of breastmilk substitutes.

Sponsorship of meetings of health professionals and scientific meetings by formula companies is not encouraged by the WHO Code or the MAIF Agreement.³ However, ACNN recognises that neonatal nurses require up to date knowledge to correctly advise parents on infant nutritional alternatives needed for medical reasons.

ACNN policy for acceptance of sponsorship, through trade exhibition or other means, will be in line with the MAIF Agreement² and the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) Minimising Commercial Influence on Education Policy.⁴

Trade exhibition by manufacturers and distributors of breastmilk substitutes, including infant formula, feeding bottles and teats, will be accepted by ACNN only from companies that comply with the WHO *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*¹ and the Australian MAIF Agreement.³ ACNN undertakes to ensure compliance with the Code and Agreement in regard to venue, exposure to the public, and promotional materials.

In addition to trade exhibition, other forms of financial support for education events from manufacturers and distributors of breast milk substitutes, including infant formula, feeding bottles and teats, will be accepted only as an unrestricted education grant.⁴

References

1. World Health Organization (1981). *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*. <https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/9241541601/en/> Accessed January 2019.
2. World Health Organization (2017). *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Frequently Asked Questions*. <https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/breastmilk-substitutes-FAQ2017/en/> Accessed January 2019.
3. Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. *Marketing in Australia of Infant Formulas 1992, updated July 2016*. <https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/public-registers/documents/D15%2B143530.pdf>
4. International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (2017). *Minimising Commercial Influence on Education Policy*. <https://iblce.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/minimising-commercial-influence-on-education-policy.pdf> Accessed January 2019. Accessed February 2019.

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