

PSANZ policy on receiving sponsorship from companies marketing infant formula

At its meeting in April 2017, the PSANZ Board discussed its position with regard to the acceptance of sponsorship from companies marketing infant formula products. The Board acknowledged that there was a duality with two distinct interests coexisting, namely a pecuniary interest as well as a responsibility for the Society to advocate breast feeding as preferred whenever possible. These interests were recognised as operating in a contradictory manner and therefore a conflict of interest. The conflict of interest was such that ambiguity about goals and values could adversely affect the community and the Society.

The Board resolved to manage this conflict of interest by making a clear declaration to maintain openness and transparency, and to develop appropriate processes to deal with the specific issues around the conflict of interest.

The Society has conversed widely, including with the President of The UK College of Paediatrics and Child Health. PSANZ has developed the following guidelines and principles:

1. PSANZ advocates that, whenever possible, a baby should exclusively receive breast milk until introduction of solids at around four to six months of age.
2. PSANZ advocates that breast milk is the preferred milk for infants for at least the first twelve months after birth.
3. PSANZ recognizes and respects that some mothers choose not to breast feed.
4. PSANZ acknowledges that there are some clinical situations in which formula alternatives or supplements are necessary for early nutrition of newborns.
5. PSANZ recognizes that engagement by expert members of the Society with companies producing breast milk substitutes and supplements may be of mutual benefit for the development of new medical nutrition therapies for babies.
6. PSANZ expects all members to declare interests that may be, or be perceived to be, as placing the member in conflict with the interests of PSANZ.
7. PSANZ totally rejects any practice that seeks to promote formula feeding as preferable to breast feeding.
8. PSANZ will only accept sponsorship from companies that comply with relevant codes of practice (e.g. Medicines Australia Code of Conduct, The World Health Organisation International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes).
9. Only companies that demonstrate willingness to share with PSANZ any breaches of the codes above and measures taken to address these breaches will be accepted as sponsors.
10. We will allow only the advertising of formula or fortifiers prescribed in hospital for medical indications and not any products that principally are intended for full term infants.
11. PSANZ will not allow the display of images of bottles and/or teats.
12. PSANZ will not allow advertising or distribution of formula products of any kind to be distributed to attendees of any PSANZ meeting or congress.



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This policy was accepted by all members of the PSANZ Board of Directors.

Dated: June 21, 2017.