
From: Kate Erickson
Sent: Tuesday, 10 November 2015 10:00 PM
To: Adjudication
Subject: A91506 & A91507 – Infant Nutrition Council – submission

Categories: Submission

To whom it may concern,

I am a Community Educator with the Australian Breastfeeding Association and mother. I am writing to ask that the ACCC look at a short-term interim approval of the current MAIF Agreement rather than the proposed 10 year approval. Ten years is an incredibly long time to approve something that is already over 20 years out of date and does not include current and recent information and studies. This short term approval would allow information from the World Health Organisation proposed new code to be known in relation to marketing of artificial milk and the relationship to childhood obesity.

During my studies I have learned so much about the benefits and incredible value - economically, environmentally, culturally - to supporting and endorsing breastfeeding. It is frustrating that most mothers give up the idea of breastfeeding due to lack of support and lack of information about breastfeeding.

By direct contrast, there is a deluge in the media from artificial milk (formula) companies who seem to advertise unfettered about the benefits of their product.

The MAIF Agreement itself needs to be reviewed in terms of its effectiveness - breaches are not penalised in any way so it is in no way a protection for mothers who are constantly hounded into thinking that there is no alternative to this expensive, processed product for their infants.

Australia is reviewing its national breastfeeding strategy at the moment. We need to look at implementing the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes in full to help protect breastfeeding and provide the best start for our children.

The existing MAIF agreement needs to be reviewed to include electronic marketing, the marketing of toddler formula and must be extended to include all those who might sell formula (including retail outlets, chemists etc).

In essence, this is a large and complex area that is too important to not be considered in full and in light of the new WHO code coming soon.

Please, consider a short term interim approval until this issue can be considered in full so that we can implement a structure that protects breastfeeding, for both mothers and their children.

Many thanks for your time and consideration.

Kate Erickson