

Australasian Association of Parenting & Child Health

MAIF Agreement

AAPCH

The Australian Association of Parenting and Child Health (AAPCH) is an international organisation of key agencies in Australia and New Zealand providing early parenting education, guidance and support for professionals working with families and young children. AAPCH is committed to optimising the physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing of children.

The AAPCH is an incorporated association in the ACT, currently with 12 member organisations (11 from Australia and 1 from New Zealand).

AIM

This position paper lodges the Association's objection to extending the Marketing in Australia of Infant Formulas: Manufacturers and Importers Agreement (MAIF Agreement) in its current form.

In this instance Plunket, the New Zealand member is not represented in this objection.

OBJECTION

The MAIF Agreement 'sets out the obligations of manufacturers in and importers to Australia of infant formulas and gives effect in Australia to the principles of the *World Health Organisation's International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes*' (Geneva, WHO Code).

In its current form the MAIF Agreement:

- has no legal authority to compel every manufacturer or importer of breast milk substitutes to comply with the agreement as the signatories are voluntary
- only has authority to address complaints of breaches of the WHO Code for marketing breast milk substitutes through the MAIF Complaints Committee if the manufacturer or importer is a signatory to the Agreement.

This leaves a large part of the industry unaccountable to the standards as set out in the MAIF Agreement and WHO Code and unregulated by the local authorities.

Ratified by the AAPCH Board July 2020

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RECOMMENDATION

The AAPCH strongly recommends that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission amends the MAIF Agreement so that it is more effective in regulating the industry against the standards set by the World Health Organisation's *International Code of Marketing Breast Milk* by:

1. establishing a legal and regulatory framework that:
 - a. that brings all manufacturers and importers of breast milk substitutes into the scope of the framework; and
 - b. mandates compliance with the framework
2. maintaining a complaints process to regulate compliance.

The Australasian Association of Parenting and Child Health does not support the continuation of the MAIF Agreement in its current form.

VERSION HISTORY AND REVIEW

V.	Date Endorsed by AAPCH Clinical Sub-Group (MM/YYYY format)	Section(s) Changed (eg principles / definitions / references)	For Review by Clinical Sub Group (three yearly or as required)
1	20/11/2020	NEW	As Required

Grainne O'Loughlin

Chair, AAPCH

November 2020

Ratified by the AAPCH Board July 2020

