Annexure 14 – INC Policy - Distribution of Infant Formula Samples to Healthcare Professionals

INFANT NUTRITION COUNCIL
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Policy – Distribution of Infant Formula Samples to Health Care Professionals

Aim

- to ensure the proper use of infant formula samples under the terms of the Marketing in Australia of Infant Formulas: Manufacturers and Importers Agreement (MAIF Agreement) and the Infant Nutrition Council Code of Practice for the Marketing of Infant Formula
- to define the role and responsibility of manufacturers and importers of infant formulas in the provision of infant formula samples
- to discourage infant formula samples from being seen as a general resource for all Health Care Professionals

Scope

- to define the governance processes for the distribution of samples to Health Care Professionals
- to define the level of information regarding samples provided to Health Care Professionals from infant formula manufacturers

Definitions

'Samples'

- single or small quantities of an infant formula provided without cost *(MAIF Agreement)*.

'Professional Evaluation' and 'Research'

The words *'professional evaluation'* apply to:

- Analysis of products (ingredients, taste, nutritional profile);
- Trial preparation and mixing of infant formula products (includes preparation and mixing instructions to mothers);
- Investigative or development projects, using sound methodology and involving a number of infants;
- A thorough assessment of the suitability of a product for an individual infant, including acceptance by the infant, when mothers have made the informed choice to use infant formula.

- An individual patient assessment includes a follow-up meeting between the health professional and the mother of the infant. (Note: This guideline was developed following discussions at the 46th meeting of the APMAIF Panel on 5 December 2002)

The word *'research'* applies to:

- Clinical research carried out at the institutional level.

'*Health Care System'*

- Governmental, non-governmental or private institutions engaged, directly or indirectly, in health care for mothers, infants and pregnant women. It also includes health workers in private practice. For the purposes of this policy document, the health care system does not include voluntary workers, nurseries, social welfare agencies or childcare centres.

'*Health Care Professional'*

- A professional or other appropriately trained person working in a component of the health care system, including pharmacists and voluntary workers.

Policy

- Manufacturers and Importers may provide infant formula samples to external health care professionals (as defined) only when requested to do so by health care professionals.
- Manufacturers and Importers should provide health care professionals with suitable educational material explaining the provisions of the MAIF Agreement or the INC Code of Practice and the responsible use of samples in the health care system including the condition that samples must never be left in public view.
- Manufacturers and Importers should only provide infant formula samples to external health care professionals after their representative has signed for and received a signed *Infant Formula Sample Request Form* from the health care professional stating that the samples will only be used in accordance with the definitions of 'professional evaluation' or 'research'. (See attachment 1: *Infant Formula Sample Request Form, which is a template form containing the minimum information required for such a form. Individual company forms do not have to use this format.*)
- Manufacturers and Importers should inform health care professionals that an individual patient assessment includes a follow-up meeting between the health professional and the mother of the infant.
- All staff of infant formula manufacturers and Importers who are responsible for the ordering, management and tracking of sample stock will receive training in the provisions of the industry codes of practice, the processes for the distribution of samples and the requirements for completion of samples request forms.
- Manufacturers and Importers are required to retain all documentation authorising samples for a 12 month period.
- Manufacturers and Importers will conduct internal reviews on infant formula sample distribution to ensure that due process is being followed and that all paperwork has been completed.