



Members of the European Parliament
European Parliament
rue Wiertz
B-1047 Brussel

Open letter

Brussels, 1 April 2011

Re: European Parliament resolution on the draft Commission regulation on the authorisation and refusal of authorisation of certain health claims made on foods and referring to children's development and health

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

We are writing to you on behalf of Eurochild, the European Midwives Association (EMA), the European Federation of the Association of Dieticians (EFAD), the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN), the Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE), the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), the European Central Council of Homeopaths (ECCH), Fundamed, the Malta Health Network, the European Shiatsu Federation and the European Public Health Alliance to strongly recommend that you support the Motion for a Resolution¹ regarding the authorisation of the DHA claim.

After members of the ENVI Committee boldly supported the text on 16th March 2011, we encourage you to follow their position when voting at the April plenary session.

According to the claim, "milk containing DHA will improve children's eyesight". However, there is no consensus amongst the scientific community on such a link². Moreover, EFSA itself has stated that there is no evidence to support the claim for follow-on formulas or baby foods. Therefore, such health claims should not be authorized, especially when targeting children.

¹ European Parliament resolution on the draft Commission regulation on the authorisation and refusal of authorisation of certain health claims made on foods and referring to children's development and health

² Simmer K, Patole S, Rao SC. Longchain polyunsaturated fatty acid supplementation in infants born at term. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2008, Issue 1. Art. No.: CD000376. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD000376.pub2

Evidence shows that health claims affect consumer-purchasing decisions which makes extremely important that authorised health claims are substantiated and do not mislead consumers.

By supporting this Motion for a Resolution, you will show commitment to healthy policy making concerning one of the most vulnerable groups, children.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN)

European Federation of the Associations of Dieticians (EFAD)

Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)

European Central Council of Homeopaths (ECCH)

European Shiatsu Federation

The Malta Health Network

Fundamed

Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE)

Eurochild

European Midwives Association (EMA)

European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

Notes:



The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) represents 34 National Nurses Associations and its work has an effect on the daily work of 6 million nurses throughout the European Union and Europe. The EFN is the independent voice of the nursing profession and its mission is to strengthen the status and practice of the profession of nursing for the benefit of the health of the citizens and the interests of nurses in the EU & Europe



EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS

Established in 1978, EFAD currently has 31 member associations, representing over 30,000 dietitians in 25 European countries. A dietician is a person with a qualification in Nutrition & Dietetics recognised by national authority. The dietitian applies the science of nutrition to the feeding and education of groups of people and individuals in both health and disease.



ECL is a pan-European umbrella organisation of national and regional cancer leagues. For over 30 years, we have been providing a unique and important platform for cancer societies. From Iceland to Turkey, ECL is represented by leagues in the extended Europe. Together, we are "making a Difference in Cancer Prevention and Control!"



The European Central Council of Homeopaths (ECCH) is the professional platform for the homeopathy profession in Europe.



The European Shiatsu Federation represents 12 national professional shiatsu associations in Europe to support the highest standards of professional practice and the integration of shiatsu into public healthcare systems.



The Malta Health Network was set up in 2007 with the aim of representing in Malta, in the EU and internationally, the interests of patients and the health of the community, developing better coordination, collaboration and capacity building through exchange of best practice among Health Non Governmental (NGO) 'not for profit' (NPO) Organisations and Patient Representation Groups (PRGs). MHN is independent of the Government of Malta and of any political party or organization. The Malta Health Network Currently has 25 member organisations and supports initiatives to protect patients' health. MHN is active in promoting The European Charter of Patients' rights.



Fundamed, Fundación de Ciencias del Medicamento y Productos Sanitarios, acts as the social arm of Contenidos e Información de Salud, a publishing company focused on health information. Our mission is to stimulate debate around health issues, trying to involve all stakeholders and core participants in the public health system, including patient organisations, health professionals, companies and public administration.



COFACE is a pluralistic organisation, at the heart of civil society, which aims at promoting family policy, solidarity between generations and the interests of children within the European Union. It defines family policy in Europe as being the family dimension of policies, programmes and initiatives developed at European Union level («family mainstreaming»).



Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to promote the rights and welfare of children and young people. Our work is underpinned by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Eurochild is supported by the European Commission within the PROGRESS Programme.



European Midwives Association (EMA) www.europeanmidwives.eu is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation representing the voice of over 100,000 midwives in Europe. EMA has membership associations and contacts in over 30 countries covering the member states of the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA), EU candidate countries and the Council of Europe.

European midwives: touching lives of over 4.5 million women, babies and their families.



EPHA is the European Platform bringing together public health organisations representing professional groups, patients, health promotion and disease specific NGOs and other health associations