

**BAPM Statement on Sponsorship by Companies Manufacturing Formula Milk – Update  
March 2020.**

In May, 2019, in response to decisions by other organisations and scientific journals, BAPM issued a formal statement on **Sponsorship by Companies Manufacturing Formula Milk**. We stated that for the 2019 Annual Conference and Scientific Meeting we would not accept payment for exhibition stalls from any company that manufactures formula milk and that we would review our position after seeking feedback from our extended membership as well as delegates at the 2019 joint BAPM and EBNEO Annual Conference and Scientific Meeting in September.

Prior to the conference we asked members to respond to an on-line questionnaire. We received 125 responses (approx 12% of our membership):

I believe formula milk companies should be able to sponsor or exhibit at BAPM events without restrictions.	<b>17 (14%)</b>
I believe BAPM should allow formula milk companies to purchase exhibition stands at events with the restriction that they must only advertise or discuss specialist formulas and breast milk fortifiers.	<b>63 (50%)</b>
I believe BAPM should allow formula milk companies to purchase exhibition stands at events with the restriction that they must only advertise or discuss breast milk fortifier.	<b>8 (6%)</b>
I believe BAPM should not allow formula milk companies to sponsor or exhibit at BAPM events at all.	<b>33 (26%)</b>
Other (If you have selected this option please state what you believe the BAPM policy should be in the box below.)	<b>4 (3%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>

238 delegates attended the conference in September and 186 provided written feedback to the question “*This year we did not accept any sponsorship from or exhibitors from formula milk companies. Will you attend future events if they receive any funding from formula milk companies?*” The answers received were as follows:

Yes	69%
No because I don't agree with FMC supporting events for healthcare professionals	22%
No because my trust will not support me to attend FMC supported events	10%

While a majority of respondents did not intimate objection to formula milk companies having some presence at BAPM events, a significant proportion stated that they would not attend future BAPM events if formula milk companies were in attendance.

Having carefully considered this feedback and taken into account wider public opinion and the policies of other similar organisations, the BAPM Executive Committee has agreed that in line with a recent statement from the Neonatal Society, we will not accept conference sponsorship from formula milk companies for Perinatal 2020 (organised jointly by the British Maternal and Fetal Medicine Society, BAPM and the Neonatal Society) although we will jointly consider abstracts of research supported by formula milk companies, so long as any sources of funding and/or conflicts of interest are declared.

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BAPM acknowledges that human-based breast milk fortifiers may not be produced by a formula milk company, but they are produced in liquid form in such volume as to be considered as a partial substitute for expressed breast milk. In the absence of clear benefit over bovine-based breast milk fortifier, we are concerned that accepting sponsorship from the manufacturers of human-based breast milk fortifier, but excluding sponsorship from manufacturers of bovine-based breast milk fortifier would potentially create an unfair commercial advantage to the manufacturers of human-based breast milk fortifiers. For these reasons we will therefore not be accepting sponsorship by companies that produce human-based breast milk fortifiers for Perinatal 2020.

In the secure knowledge that WHO Code does not consider breast milk fortifier to be classified as a breastmilk substitute we plan further consultation with our members specifically around allowing presentation of breast milk fortifier(s) at future events.

The Association will continue to advocate for appropriate platforms for scientific interaction between perinatal professionals and companies manufacturing breast milk fortifiers and/or specialist preterm and metabolic formulae, as well as ongoing research into neonatal nutrition, which we strongly believe to be in the interests of the babies for whom we care. BAPM is currently developing a toolkit to help healthcare professionals in increasing the proportion of babies who receive maternal breast milk.

**3 March 2020**