



Consultation on the HK code of marketing and quality of Formula Milk

to:

hkcode@dh.gov.hk

01/03/2013 17:34

[Hide Details](#)

From:

To: <hkcode@dh.gov.hk>

History: This message has been replied to.

Dear Sirs,

I understand the public consultation has ended yesterday but I hope you could also take my comments into account.

I am a mother of 2, recently gave birth to my 2nd child Dec 2012. I will be going back to work mid March and I have recently been thinking very hard about if I could continue to breastfeed my baby when I return to work.

In my view, the advertising of formula milk companies is not the main factor which deters mothers from breastfeeding. I have met and chatted to many mothers in my generation who know breast milk is best, and it is not not due the the advertising of the milk companies which makes us feed our children formula milk.

I work in a very demanding job in finance and after I returned to work having had my 1st child, my breast milk supply completely dried up. I had no lunch break, nor time really to go to the toilet, so taking time out during work to express was out of the question. My milk supply was also inadequate, hence I've had to supplement both my children early on with formula milk along with breast milk.

My maternity leave was only for 10 weeks and hence it is really within these 10 weeks which I could breast feed my child. Once I go back to work, he would be on formula 100%.

Therefore, I think the government would review the maternity leave policy and increase it from 10 weeks to at least 12 weeks. If you look at other developed countries within Asia - I would think Singapore is a close peer - their statutory maternity leave is 4 months. Other European countries offer at least 3 months. The working culture and pressure in HK is great and hence for working mothers, I believe the biggest factor stopping us from breast feeding is the short maternity leave in HK.

There is also little practical lactation support from the hospitals and doctors/nurses. I had to pay \$1000 each session with a fabulous private lactation consultant to help with the breastfeeding in the early days. Without

her professional support and advice, I may have given up on breastfeeding much earlier! The nurses at the hospital (I gave birth at Adventist Stubbs Rd) were very busy and I did not feel they had the time / patience to really help new mothers on the techniques on breastfeeding. I believe hospitals should have dedicated lactation consultants who can spend time sitting through with new mums during the entire time they are trying to breastfeed.

Advertising of formula milk helps give parents more information on which formula to choose because inevitably due to the lack of support / professional lactation advice some mothers may give up on breastfeeding, or in my case, due to the short maternity law required by law, I am forced to give up breastfeeding when I return to work.

Rgds
Fabienne Kwan Ling Yi