

# MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC v MEDA

## Alleged promotion to the public

A member of the public complained about an EpiPen (adrenaline auto injector) Facebook post by the mother of a child with life-threatening allergies. It consisted of a photograph of two EpiPens followed by the statement 'This petition supports the #carrytwocampaign. We ask the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology BSACI to reverse its recommendation of one auto injector pen, back to two'. This was followed by a link to the petition.

The complainant objected to the advertising of only one of three available adrenaline pens to 50,000 individuals. The complainant did not know if the person who posted the petition had received any gratuity and regardless of whether she did it was still advertising a prescription only medicine to the public.

The complainant stated that had all three options been included there would have at least been equal bias but either way she considered that Facebook should not be a platform for advertising prescription only medicines to the public.

The detailed response from Meda is given below.

The Panel noted Meda's submission that it had had no involvement with the petition or the Facebook post and it had not had any contact directly or indirectly with the person involved or provided the photograph. The Panel considered that on the information before it, Meda had had no involvement with the petition or Facebook post and thus it could not be in breach of the Code. The Panel ruled no breach of the Code including Clause 2.

A member of the public complained about an EpiPen (adrenaline auto injector) advertisement placed on Facebook. The Facebook post was from the mother of a child with life-threatening allergies who was concerned that the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) had recommended that prescriptions for adrenaline auto injector pens should be changed from a minimum of two pens to one.

The Facebook post consisted of a photograph of two EpiPens followed by the statement 'This petition supports the #carrytwocampaign. We ask the BSACI to reverse its recommendation of one auto injector pen, back to two'. This was followed by a link to the petition.

### COMPLAINT

The complainant stated that she did not object to the sentiment of the petition but rather to the advertising of only one of three available adrenaline pens to 50,000 individuals. The complainant did not know if the person who posted the petition had received any gratuity for it but considered that it was possible and regardless of whether she did it was still advertising a prescription only medicine to the public.

The complainant stated that had the advertisement been presented with all three options there would have at least been equal bias but either way she considered that Facebook should not be a platform for advertising prescription only medicines to the public.

When writing to Meda the Authority asked it to respond in relation to the requirements of Clauses 26.1, 9.1 and 2.

### RESPONSE

Meda stated that it had no involvement in the carry two Facebook petition and was unaware of it until notified of the complaint. It was unaware of the mother who posted the petition and had never had any contact directly or indirectly with her. Meda submitted that it did not provide the EpiPen photograph in question nor had it paid any gratuity or provided any benefits for the publication of the photograph. Meda stated that photographs of all adrenaline auto injectors were easily accessible via the Internet. Meda concluded that it had no involvement with the petition on Facebook and was committed to abiding by the Code at all times.

### PANEL RULING

The Panel noted Meda's submission that it had had no involvement with the petition or the Facebook post. The Panel further noted Meda's submission that it had not had any contact directly or indirectly with the person involved nor had it provided the photograph. The Panel considered that on the information before it, Meda had had no involvement with the petition or Facebook post and thus it could not be in breach of the Code. The Panel ruled no breach of Clauses 2, 9.1 and 26.1.

**Complaint received**      **28 October 2016**

**Case completed**        **16 November 2016**