



Approval of CERPs for educational sessions funded or sponsored by Medela, Inc.

At its March 21, 2009 meeting, the Board of Directors of the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) considered recent developments regarding the marketing practices of Medela, Inc., manufacturers of breast-milk pumps, milk-collection containers, and feeding bottles and nipples (teats). In particular, it focused on Medela's alleged violation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes by including feeding bottles and nipples in its product promotion to the general public, and what effect this might have on approval of CERPs (Continuing Education Recognition Points) for educational sessions funded or sponsored by Medela.

Among its considerations, the Board noted that the aim of the International Code is to contribute to the provision of safe and adequate nutrition for infants; that the mission and vision of IBLCE are consistent with the aim of the Code; that there are differing points of view within the international lactation consultant and breastfeeding support community concerning interpretation of the Code; and that Medela's declared intention in marketing its products was to support breastfeeding and breast-milk feeding and, as needed, to provide other means for ensuring safe and adequate nutrition for infants, consistent with the aim of the Code.

In the light of these considerations and the fact that, as a precautionary measure prior to its March 21st meeting, IBLCE had suspended review of applications for CERPs for education funded or sponsored by Medela, the Board decided that:

- IBLCE resume granting CERPs for sessions funded or sponsored by Medela while observing closely Medela's marketing practices;
- IBLCE reserve the right to alter its CERPs approval policy should circumstances warrant any change;
- IBLCE review its policy and practice regarding the approval of CERPs funded or sponsored by *any* commercial entity.

IBLCE recognizes that its decision to reinstate granting CERPs for sessions funded or sponsored by Medela is at variance with the conclusion reached by other organizations. However, in adopting a broad view of the situation, IBLCE affirms that the overriding consideration in any action it takes in this regard is the extent to which it contributes to the best possible feeding outcome for the greatest number of mothers and children worldwide.

March 30, 2009