NATIONAL AGENCY FOR FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL (NAFDAC)

COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN AND GUIDANCE NOTE TO COMPANIES THAT DONATE OR MARKET BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES (BMS) FOR INFANTS

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), pursuant to provisions of the NAFDAC Act, CAP N1 LFN 2004 and the MARKETING (BREAST-MILK SUBSTITUTES) ACT CAP M.5 LFN 2004 and the BMS regulations, in keeping with the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (BMS) wishes to provide the following clarifications regarding donations of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) in the context of lockdown and financial barriers occasioned by the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Companies that market foods for infants and young children (breastmilk substitutes) should not provide free products, samples or reduced-price foods for infants (below 6 months old) to families through health workers or health facilities, except as supplies distributed through Government or officially sanctioned health programmes.

The WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (BMS) requires that products distributed in such programmes should not display company brands. In this specific instance, the unbranded packaging is to focus on the need to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, where necessary in terms of infant and young child feeding, rather than use the pandemic as a platform for brand promotion.

Through this medium the Agency wishes to advise all infant food manufacturers/distributors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) wishing to make foods for infants and young children (BMS) available for distribution, through officially sanctioned health programmes, to adhere to the clarification provided above and approach NAFDAC for the necessary guidance.
The importance of infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and the continued protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be over-emphasized. Breastmilk is the best food for the newborn child as it protects them from sicknesses, it also helps to protect infants and young children. Breastfeeding is especially effective against infectious diseases as it boosts the child’s immunity by directly transferring antibodies from the mother to the child.

For specific advice on breastfeeding in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic please visit the following websites:

**WHO for the guidance** titled 'Breastfeeding advice during the COVID-19 outbreak available at:


NAFDAC wishes to reassure the general public that the Agency will continue to safeguard public health including neonates and older infants, within the purview of her mandate, as the whole world and Nigeria in particular continues to confront the raging COVID-19 pandemic.

**NAFDAC** ........safeguarding the health of the Nation

**Director General**