

## **Conflict of interest and ethics policy**

**WPHNA**

**April 2017**

### **WPHNA**

The **World Public Health Nutrition Association** (WPHNA, or the Association)

The Association overall purpose is to bring together people with a common interest in promoting and improving public health nutrition and to be a professional voice for public health nutrition internationally. We do that in order to:

- a) further the mission of public health nutrition, to prevent disease, and to promote well-being; and
- b) build our professional capacity and to represent the interests of our and allied professions

The Association is an individual membership organisation. Application for membership is open to anybody who supports the aims and purposes of the Association and upholds ethical principles including those of transparency, equity and respect.

### **Aims and objectives**

The aim of our conflict of interest and ethics policy is to protect the independence, integrity and trustworthiness of the World Public Health Nutrition Association.

WPHNA promotes public interest in its research and advocacy and work on food and nutrition. Its aim is to promote the highest attainable standards of health for all. We work to manage and eliminate conflicts of interest, and expect the same from our members[hip]. We are committed to the human right to health for all. We uphold high ethical standards and expect high ethical standards of our members and of our partners. We will not accept membership from any professional society, civil society group or coalition that has significant links with conflicted industries.

### **Rationale**

WPHNA is committed to population, family and personal well-being and good health. WPHNA will not engage with industries that produce, promote or in other

ways, commercialize products that are harmful to public health or nutritional status, and does not accept funding or sponsorships or any other financial arrangements or gifts from these industries:

- Because ultra-processed food and drink products have a detrimental impact on health and cause chronic non-communicable diseases such as dental caries, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancers.
- Because marketing to children of ultra-processed products such as sugar-sweetened drinks, energy drinks and other non-alcoholic drinks cause obesity and diabetes in childhood and early and adult life.
- Because marketing and consumption of baby milks and related industrial infant feeding products cause increased child malnutrition, illness and death.

WPHNA's integrity and good reputation strengthen and preserve our trustworthiness in our work to protect and improve nutrition, health and well-being worldwide. We support and work in solidarity with other non-conflicted professionals and professional organisations and social movements with similar commitments in various areas of public health, nutrition, agriculture, and other activities that support the quality and sustainability of food systems, dietary patterns and personal diets.

## **Principles**

WPHNA abides by UN human rights covenants especially the right to health, to food and to education of all, of course including women, children, minorities, people with special abilities, as well as the rights of nature.

Public health nutrition is an integral part of public health. As stated in *The Giessen Declaration* \* it must be based on ethical, evolutionary, ecological, and equitable principles, and take history and tradition into account. Its dimensions are social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental, as well as biological and behavioural. [L] [SEP]

In its work, WPHNA will not be funded, sponsored, supported or influenced by corporations, companies and related organizations whose products, practices or policies are harmful to public health or nutritional status. This relates to our commitment to the right to health for all people. WPHNA will not be influenced by

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\* 2005. The Giessen Declaration. *Public Health Nutr*, 8, 783-6.

any organizations in opposition to its aims and objectives. Sponsorship from UN and similar international agencies, national, regional and municipal governments, professional and civil society organisations, and other public and other independent entities, will be welcomed when they do not conflict with the aims and objectives of public health nutrition as set out here.

## **Applications**

WPHNA members are encouraged not to accept funding from or substantially invest in corporations, companies or any other organization or alliance or initiative conceived, founded, funded, led, controlled or organized by corporations or companies whose products, practices or policies conflict with WPHNA's aims and objectives as set out here.

Businesses and initiatives that WPHNA will not engage with include:

1. The arms, tobacco and alcohol industries
2. Industries producing or promoting soft drinks and drinks with substantial concentration of added sugar.
3. Industries producing or promoting ultra-processed food products and other ultra-processed drinks.
4. Industries producing or promoting infant formula, pacifiers, baby bottles, or follow on 'milks'.
5. Industries producing genetically modified organisms, pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, or any other product directly or indirectly detrimental to public health and nutrition;
6. Organizations with policies, objectives, principles, vision, mission or goals that include or relate to an increase in the production, supply, availability, promotion and demand of unhealthy food and drink products.

Unacceptable practices include the advertising and marketing of products that have negative public health and nutrition effects. They also include stimulating unhealthy ways of eating or drinking, such as overeating, or lobbying against legislative, economic, judicial or sociocultural measures that aim at reducing the production, supply, availability or demand of these unhealthy products.

## **Conflicts of interest and of loyalties**

Members of the WPHNA Executive Committee will Declare the nature and extent of any conflict of interest, direct or indirect, perceived or real, regarding any proposed transactions or arrangements with the Association.

Abstain from any voting or decision-making of the Association Executive Committee (who are its trustees) where a conflict may arise between duty to act solely in the interests of the Association and personal interests (including but not limited to any personal financial, or other interest, such as being part of an advisory board, having a close relative with employment ties to industries, companies or related organization referred to under ‘applications’ above.

### **Funding for WPHNA events**

WPHNA events are planned and stated as being held without conflicting sponsorship. WPHNA will not work in partnership with organizations whose interests, products, practices or policies conflict or are in serious competition with the goals of public health nutrition.