

FAQ'S

Question 33

Can a company advertise a vaccine to the general public?

Nicola Brink replies

Vaccines are scheduled medicines. Vaccines are schedule 2 and therefore need to comply with the laws on advertising regarding S2 and above medications. One can provide information on disease types/ states directly to the public as well as immunisation awareness posters in conjunction with the DoH and this is line with the MCA Code.

In terms of Guidelines to the Code of Marketing Practice February 2015 Clause 20.9 Relations with the General Public and Media page 24 – it says the following:

- Note 2: Information to the public.

This clause allows for the provision of non-promotional information about S2 and above to the general public either in response to a direct inquiry from an individual, including inquiries from journalists, or by dissemination of such information via press conferences, press announcements, television and radio reports, public relations activities and the like. It also includes information provided by means of posters distributed for display in surgery waiting rooms.

This prohibition does not apply to vaccination campaigns or other public health campaigns carried out by companies and approved by the Department of Health and/or Medicines Regulatory Authority. Any information so provided must observe the principles set out in this clause, that is, it should be factual, balanced and must not encourage members of the public, to ask their doctors to prescribe a specific health product.