

MCA's new website guided by updated code

An updated code, new branding and fresh website were introduced at the MCA's AGM on 21 June at the Johannesburg Country Club, in Woodmead, Gauteng.

The adoption of the Marketing Code Authority's (MCA) Code v11 and Guidelines v9 was unanimous at the AGM. This latest version of the code takes into account the global landscape, looking at ethical marketing trends in the US, Europe and the UK, to ensure South Africa is relevant.

Wayne McDuling, chairperson of the MCA, explained there is a paradigm shift in the market so Code v11 has advanced from being rules based to a principles based system. 'The rules won't disappear as they are the foundation. Yet ethical marketing needs to be taken to a completely new level, which sits within the principles of this practice.'

The MCA Code sets the rules of engagement between the supplier and the healthcare professional for marketing and selling activities and sponsorship for educational meetings. It applies to healthcare products only and not cosmetics, and disallows funding of any entertainment or sporting events. The MCA adjudicates

on complaints and any party can lodge a complaint against one of its member companies. Sanctions and fines may be issued.

PLATFORM FOR DIALOGUE

One of goals of the refreshed business to business MCA website will be to enable communication between government; medical device, pharma and CAMs businesses; healthcare professionals and consumers. It will open up access to healthcare practitioners and the public to lay complaints in terms of the Code.

The homepage will feature a detailed infographic with each section hyperlinked to content on the MCA, to provide an easy to use public interface with the authority.

All customer facing company staff are expected to be certified as competent in the application of the Code and the new website will continue to provide this functionality.



▲ Val Beaumont, MCA's executive director; Griffith Molewa, head of law enforcement at SAHPRA; and Wayne McDuling, MCA's chairperson shake hands, showing the industry body and SAHPRA's willingness to work together to enforce ethical marketing and promotional activities

Company signatories of the MCA's Code of Marketing

Practice are committed to marketing their products to healthcare professionals, patients and consumers in an ethical manner and in line with international best practice. The best interests of the patient or consumer should come first in health product selection. Healthcare professionals should not be incentivised to select any health product, be it medical device, IVD or medicine.

The support the industry brings in terms of healthcare education is highly valued and makes a significant contribution to the continuing professional development of healthcare practitioners. •

Marketing Code Authority -
www.marketingcode.co.za