[GB] Toothpaste Advertisements Are not Whiter-than-White

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David Goldberg
deeJgee Research/Consultancy

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has recently upheld complaints concerning advertisements repeating dentists' endorsements of two toothpaste products. Complaints about broadcast advertising require the ASA to apply the broadcast advertising Code to the commercials in question.

The relevant part of the Code is Section 8, “Medicines, Treatments, Health Claims and Nutrition.” It states that:

"The following are not acceptable in advertisements for products or treatments within the remit of Section 8:....Impressions of professional advice and support". Such impressions can include "...references to approval of, or preference for, any relevant product or its ingredients or their use by the professions referred to in (a) above"; (a) includes "doctors, dentists, veterinary surgeons, pharmaceutical chemists, nurses, midwives, etc..".

Interestingly, the ASA accepted that no research evidence existed, but said it had a duty to consider the likely impact of the advertisements on viewers.

Broadcast Advertising Adjudications, 4 January 2006

http://www.asa.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7B243D0A-E15E-410D-B935-966E351489FB/0/Broadcast_report_4_Jan_2006.pdf

BCAP TV Advertising Code SECTION 8: Medicines, Treatments, Health Claims and Nutrition

http://www.asa.org.uk/asa/codes/tv_code/tv_codes/Section+8+-+Medicines.+Treatments.+Health+Claims.+Nutrition.htm

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