



ISRHML
The International Society
for Research in Human
Milk and Lactation

November 10, 2017

Statement from the ISRHML Executive Committee

In light of a recent controversy surrounding the participation of some of our members in a conference organized by an educational institute linked to a large food company that manufactures infant formula, the Executive Committee of the International Society for Research in Human Milk and Lactation (ISRHML) expresses its full support for its members who choose to participate in these types of conferences as long as their presentations are based on unbiased evidence.

ISRHML is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of excellence in research and the dissemination of research findings in the fields of human milk and lactation. As independent researchers, ISRHML members are free to decide the stakeholders with whom they wish to interact and collaborate. Collectively ISRHML members conduct highly diverse research, from basic biology to public health, that for decades has greatly improved breastfeeding outcomes and the health of women and children globally. In fact, ISRHML members who spoke at the conference in question highlighted both the many benefits of breastfeeding and human milk as well as the many gaps in knowledge related to human milk composition and its role in infant health.

Singling out ISRHML members and shaming them for their participation in industry-supported conferences creates a divisive and poisoned environment that is highly counterproductive to the very goals of conducting excellent research and disseminating scientific findings in the field of breastfeeding, human milk, and lactation. ISRHML acknowledges that there are many sensitive issues surrounding the World Health Organization's International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitute (the Code) which is at the root of these most unfortunate recent events. In fact, several ISRHML members are conducting research regarding the Code, and it is a topic that we heavily take into account when approaching sponsors for our highly prestigious international meetings.

The ISRHML Executive Committee encourages on-going, constructive dialogue with any stakeholders who wish to discuss further these matters.