

Dear Sir

My organisation – the International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO) – and its highly-respected think tank – the International Obesity TaskForce (IOTF) – has over 10,000 members worldwide, in over 50 national and regional member bodies. We have published widely on issues concerning child obesity, including supporting an International Code of Marketing of Food and Beverages to Children. This Code urges governments to restrict the promotion of foods and beverages high in fats, sugars and salt to children, and we are often citing the UK as a ‘best practice’ example of TV controls which limit the marketing of such products to children.

We strongly oppose the DCMS proposals to permit product placement in popular TV programmes likely to be seen by large numbers of children and adolescents. Such a move would not only put children at greater risk of consuming excess food calories but would send a message to national authorities in other countries that the UK position is seriously weakening, at a time when several countries are considering toughening their stance, and the World Health Organization is considering developing an international code to limit children’s exposure to food marketing as a means of protecting health.

We urge you to withdraw these proposals.

Yours sincerely

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