



1 November 2016

Sarah Berry

Health and Wellness Journalist

Sydney Morning Herald

**Re: Big Food and Big Nutrition Lies**

Dear Sarah.

I'm contacting you about your article 'Big Food and Big Nutrition Lies' in the Sydney Morning Herald and other Fairfax outlets today, reporting on Professor Lisa Bero's paper.

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) supports healthy debate around nutrition, and in this case, the processes around developing our country's Dietary Guidelines. We've viewed Professor Bero's paper, which you refer to in your article. In our opinion, it would be a long bow to suggest from this study that there is an issue specific to the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

Professor Amanda Lee led the revision of the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines, as Chair of the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) Dietary Guidelines Working Committee. We feel she would have been able to provide another perspective for your story, especially around the process of developing the Guidelines. For instance, one part of the process was a systematic literature review, which assessed more than 55,000 peer-reviewed studies.

The Dietary Guidelines are intended to provide a *framework* for healthy eating – and DAA supports these recommendations for the healthy population. We also always recommend people who are confused about what to eat or need more specific dietary advice seek support from an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD).

Sadly, we believe questioning the Dietary Guidelines as a framework for healthy eating inadvertently adds fodder to support the views of those who are not qualified in nutrition, but strongly advocate certain 'diets' - which unlike the Dietary Guidelines, are not based on a body of evidence.

We have raised concerns about some of the nutrition messages given to Australians by people like Pete Evans, and we're proud of our work in speaking out about his book 'Bubba Yum Yum: The Paleo Way for New Mums, Babies and Toddlers'. This contained an infant formula recipe made of bone broth, containing dangerously high levels of Vitamin A and iron, and no calcium – with the potential to make babies very ill.

Your article also mentions DAA Corporate Partnerships. Thank you for linking to information on our website about our partnerships. We'd be grateful for the opportunity to discuss our Corporate Partnerships in future stories you may be doing that mention these. But just to provide some brief information on these now:

- We're very open about the fact that we partner with a range of organisations. We also understand that some people may question our Corporate Partnerships. We are a small not-for-profit member-based organisation with a big job and working with partners allows us to extend evidence-based nutrition messages further than we could do on our own.
- When we partner with companies, we're able to work with them and influence what they're doing. For example, a DAA requirement in partnering with a company is that they have an Accredited Practising Dietitian employed within

the company. DAA supports these APDs to drive reformulation of processed foods to reduce nutrients of concern, such as sodium and saturated fats, in their products.

- Our partnership with Nestle is often mentioned, as it was in your article. Nestle is a leading producer of clinical nutrition products, like tube and formula feeds - products that APDs working in clinical settings use each day to support their patients. We also partner with Campbell Arnott's, and our partnership is focussed on their Vita-Weat, V8 juice and Country Ladle Soups, as wholegrains and vegetables are key to a healthy diet. So our partnerships are well thought out, in line with our vision and mission, and relate to our profession.
- We always maintain our independence in working with partners. We have a number of protections in place, including binding legal contracts which protect the independence of both organisations, and policies and procedures in place (such as our 'Corporate Partnership and Sponsorship Policy' and our 'Guiding Principles for engaging with DAA Partners and Sponsors'). We make sure that externally we're transparent and upfront, and internally we have demarcation lines so we get a better outcome for Australia because we're passionate about people eating better and living longer.

We thank you for continuing to discuss nutrition-related topics with your readers, and for your consideration of the above.

We'd love for you to come to us for our perspective or comment on future nutrition-related stories you may be working on: Felicity Curtain on [media@daa.asn.au](mailto:media@daa.asn.au) or telephone 0409 661 920.

Yours faithfully,



Claire Hewat AdvAPD  
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Dietitians Association of Australia