

COMPLAINT NUMBER	17/237
COMPLAINANT	M Honeychurch
ADVERTISER	Century Mail
ADVERTISEMENT	Century Mail, Print
DATE OF MEETING	18 August 2017
OUTCOME	Settled

Advertisement: The AA Directions magazine advertisement for Century Mail Compression Socks, describes the benefits of the compressions socks, including varicose veins, arthritis, tendonitis, swelling, leg fatigue and poor circulation.

The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled.

Complainant, M Honeychurch, said: AA Directions, Autumn 2017 Magazine
The Century Mail advert for Magnetic Compression Socks makes therapeutic claims about the socks' ability to treat pain. The advert starts with talking about how to "Discover how you can walk confidently into a life without pain" and goes on to say:

"The healing power of magnets will help reduce your pain"

"the magical healing properties of magnets" "May increase blood circulation, actively reduce swelling" "Imagine that. Your leg pain. Gone forever" "Once you cure your leg pain, all your other pains could start to disappear" "these Magnetic Compression Socks are going to change your life" "A life without leg pain is waiting for you!" "get ready to say "Hello", to your new, pain-free legs" "Provides relief for: Varicose veins, Arthritis, Tendonitis, Peripheral neuropathy, Leg fatigue, Poor circulation, Swelling, Heel pain, Sore, aching legs and feet"

This advert breaches Principle 1 of the ASA's Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code as it's socially irresponsible to make so many unsupported claims about health conditions such as arthritis, poor circulation and leg pain that these conditions can supposedly be helped with magical healing socks.

Rule 1(b) is breached, as the advert makes claims that the socks are both unailing ("they work. Guaranteed. 100%.") and magical ("the magical healing properties of magnets").

Rule 1(c) is breached, as this advert appears to be targeted towards elderly people.

Principle 2 is breached, as the advert is not truthful in its portrayal of the therapeutic abilities of magnetic compression socks and is likely to be misleading.

Rule 2(a) is breached, as the claims that have been listed above have not been substantiated.

Rule 2(f) is breached, as there are testimonials in the advert that have not been shown to be valid or typical. One the adverts is supposedly written by a medical doctor.

Although it's not surprising to see an advert such as this from a mail order company such as Century Mail, it's disappointing that the AA decided to carry the advert and did not have sufficient filtering in place to spot that this ad is in breach of the ASA's codes.

The relevant provisions were Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code - Guideline 2(a), Principle 1, Principle 2.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern that the advertisement makes unsubstantiated therapeutic claims about Magnetic Compression socks which are misleading and socially irresponsible.

Upon receipt of the complaint, the Advertiser had contacted the Secretariat and confirmed it would no longer be promoting the product in question.

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and the self-regulatory action taken in removing the advertisement from future marketing campaigns, the Chair said that it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board. The Chair ruled that the matter was settled.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **Settled**