

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/137
ADVERTISER	Simillimum Homeopathic Dispensary
ADVERTISEMENT	Digital Marketing
DATE OF MEETING	16 April 2020
OUTCOME	Settled – advertisement amended

Advertisement: The website advertisement for the Simillimum Homeopathic Dispensary, <https://simillimum.co.nz/news/homeopathic-remedies-influenza>, describes 5 common Homeopathic remedies and matches these to various influenza symptoms.

The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled.

Complaint: This company sells what it calls homeopathic remedies for influenza. The five products they list are claimed to be medicines to be taken. The site suggests which one to take for various sets of influenza symptoms. So which Homeopathic medicines do you take?

Outlined below are 5 common Homeopathic medicines and the symptoms to look for when selecting your medicine. Do not worry if not all the symptoms listed under the medicine are present as long as the main symptoms of the patient are well represented in the description. I have not included common symptoms such as nasal congestion as it is almost always present with flu.

This is I believe a breach of the ASA's Therapeutic Codes principle 2 and rule 2(a) that advertisements are truthful and claims shall be able to be substantiated. Considering the considerable evidence on the ineffectiveness of homeopathy, the claims are unlikely to be backed by any reliable evidence.

Advertiser, Simillimum Homeopathic Dispensary, said “I have removed the article from our website so now consider the matter closed.”

The relevant provisions were Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code - Principle 2, Rule 2(a);

Principle 2: Truthful Presentation: Advertisements shall be truthful, balanced and not misleading. Advertisements shall not mislead or be likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust, exploit their lack of knowledge or without justifiable reason, play on fear. This includes by implication, omission, ambiguity, exaggerated or unrealistic claim or hyperbole.

Rule 2 (a) Truthful presentation: Advertisements shall be accurate. Statements and claims shall be valid and shall be able to be substantiated. Substantiation should exist prior to a claim being made. For medicines and medical devices, therapeutic claims must be consistent with the approved indication(s) (for medicines) or the listed intended purpose (for medical devices).

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern the advertisement made unsubstantiated claims about homeopathic remedies for influenza which could be misleading.

The Chair acknowledged the Advertiser had removed the article in question after receiving the complaint.

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and the self-regulatory action taken in removing the claim from the website, the Chair said it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board.

The Chair ruled the matter was Settled.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **Settled – advertisement amended**

APPEAL INFORMATION

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website www.asa.co.nz. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.