

Mr Miles D. White
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Abbott Laboratories
100 Abbott Park Road
Abbott Park
Illinois 60064-3500
USA

Directorate of Professional
Activities

22 July 2013

Dear Mr White

Use of Abbott Laboratories products in force-feeding detainees at Guantánamo Bay

The British Medical Association (BMA) is concerned by reports that your products, including Ensure and Jevity, are being used by the US military in the force-feeding of detainees at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base.

The force-feeding of mentally competent adult hunger strikers is a gross violation of internationally accepted standards of medical ethics, as articulated by the World Medical Association (WMA) Declaration of Malta. These standards are based on the established principle that force-feeding, contrary to an informed and voluntary refusal, is unjustifiable. Forcible feeding is never ethically acceptable. Even if intended to benefit, feeding accompanied by threats, coercion, force or use of physical restraints, such as those employed at Guantánamo, is a form of inhuman and degrading treatment.

We note that, according to Abbott Laboratories' 2011-2012 Interim Global Citizenship Report, your company "believes in the dignity of every human being and respects individual rights as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". Given that the WMA's unequivocal position is that force-feeding hunger strikers amounts to inhuman and degrading treatment, the use of your products in the force-feeding regime at Guantánamo is clearly at odds with Abbott Laboratories' stated aims and ethos. It also implicates your company in the ongoing violation of the detainees' rights under Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which protects individuals from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

In addition, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights call upon businesses to avoid infringing the human rights of others. They also call on businesses to address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved, and to seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts. These principles place a duty on Abbott Laboratories, as a responsible multinational business, to take active steps to prevent the use of its products in force-feeding.

As a trade union and professional association, the BMA represents over 150,000 UK doctors and medical students. Our members have recently condemned the involvement of doctors and nurses in force-feeding and are deeply concerned that pharmaceutical products, which they rely on in their own clinical practice, are being used in this way.

I am sure that, as a responsible global brand, Abbott Laboratories does not want to be associated with the practice of force-feeding. In order to avoid further damage, both to your corporate reputation and to the trust that doctors worldwide place in your products, the BMA urges you to take whatever steps are necessary to disassociate your products from use in the force-feeding of detainees at Guantánamo or elsewhere.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this issue.

Yours sincerely

Professor Vivienne Nathanson
Director of Professional Activities

Chief Executive/Secretary: Tony Bourne

Mr Christian Herrmann
Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Headquarters
Morton Salt, Inc.
123 North Wacker Drive
Chicago
Illinois 60606-1743
USA

**Directorate of Professional
Activities**

22 July 2013

Dear Mr Herrmann

Use of Morton Salt Substitute in force-feeding detainees at Guantánamo Bay

The British Medical Association (BMA) is concerned by reports that Morton Salt Substitute is being used by the US military in the force-feeding of detainees at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base.

The force-feeding of mentally competent adult hunger strikers is a gross violation of internationally accepted standards of medical ethics, as articulated by the World Medical Association (WMA) Declaration of Malta. These standards are based on the established principle that force-feeding, contrary to an informed and voluntary refusal, is unjustifiable. Forcible feeding is never ethically acceptable. Even if intended to benefit, feeding accompanied by threats, coercion, force or use of physical restraints, such as those employed at Guantánamo, is a form of inhuman and degrading treatment.

We note that, according to Morton Salt's website, your company's "internal credo" is: "Nothing is more important to Morton Salt than health and safety – not production, not sales, not profit". The BMA was also pleased to read that "[e]very task that [Morton Salt] perform[s] is done with health and safety in mind, including product development; facility design and operation; and the transportation, sale, use, and final disposition of...products". Given that the WMA's unequivocal position is that force-feeding hunger strikers amounts to inhuman and degrading treatment, the use of your products in the force-feeding regime at Guantánamo is clearly at odds with Morton Salt's stated aims and ethos. It also implicates your company in the ongoing violation of the detainees' rights under Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which protects individuals from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

In addition, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights call upon businesses to avoid infringing the human rights of others. They also call on businesses to address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved, and to seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts. These principles place a duty on Morton Salt to take active steps to prevent the use of its products in force-feeding.

I am sure that, as a responsible global brand, Morton Salt does not want to be associated with the practice of force-feeding. In order to avoid further damage to your corporate reputation, the BMA urges you to take whatever steps are necessary to disassociate your products from use in the force-feeding of detainees at Guantánamo or elsewhere.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this issue.

Yours sincerely

Professor Vivienne Nathanson
Director of Professional Activities

Chief Executive/Secretary: Tony Bourne

Mr Luis Cantarell
CEO, Nestlé Health Science SA
Avenue Nestlé 55
1800 Vevey
Switzerland

Directorate of Professional
Activities

22 July 2013

Dear Mr Cantarell

Use of Nestlé Health Science product in force-feeding detainees at Guantánamo Bay

The British Medical Association (BMA) is concerned by reports that one of your products, Boost Plus, is being used by the US military in the force-feeding of detainees at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base.

The force-feeding of mentally competent adult hunger strikers is a gross violation of internationally accepted standards of medical ethics, as articulated by the World Medical Association (WMA) Declaration of Malta. These standards are based on the established principle that force-feeding, contrary to an informed and voluntary refusal, is unjustifiable. Forcible feeding is never ethically acceptable. Even if intended to benefit, feeding accompanied by threats, coercion, force or use of physical restraints, such as those employed at Guantánamo, is a form of inhuman and degrading treatment.

We note that Nestlé fully supports the United Nations Global Compact's guiding principles on human rights and labour, and aims to provide an example of good human rights and labour practices throughout its business activities. Given that the WMA's unequivocal position is that force-feeding hunger strikers amounts to inhuman and degrading treatment, the use of your products in the force-feeding regime at Guantánamo is clearly at odds with Nestlé's stated aims. It also implicates your company in the ongoing violation of the detainees' rights under Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which protects individuals from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

In addition, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights call upon businesses to avoid infringing the human rights of others. They also call on businesses to address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved, and to seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts. These principles place a duty on Nestlé, as a responsible multinational business, to take active steps to prevent the use of its products in force-feeding.

I am sure that, as a responsible global brand, Nestlé Health Science does not want to be associated with the practice of force-feeding. In order to avoid further damage to your corporate reputation, the BMA urges you to take whatever steps are necessary to disassociate your products from use in the force-feeding of detainees at Guantánamo or elsewhere.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this issue.

Yours sincerely

Professor Vivienne Nathanson
Director of Professional Activities

Chief Executive/Secretary: Tony Bourne

NESTLÉ S.A.

RUDOLF RAMSAUER
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Professor
Vivienne Nathanson
Director of Professional Activities
British Medical Association
BMA House, Tavistock Square
London
WC1H 9JP

Vevey, 31 July 2013

Dear Professor Nathanson,

Thank you for your letter of 22nd July 2013 and for bringing this matter to our attention. The complexity of the issues you raise is of great concern to the company.

We are aware of a US Department of Defense Standard Operating Procedure document which mentions our product, and we have been investigating the situation. At this point we cannot ascertain that our product is being used for the purpose which you describe. *Boost Plus*® is not intended for this use.

People choose to drink *Boost Plus*®, which is widely distributed and sold by retailers and institutions in the US to help maintain a healthy weight or to gain weight. It is a calorically dense oral nutritional supplement used by people who may require this type of additional nutrition. This includes patients who are recovering from an injury or surgery, or people who have difficulty chewing or swallowing solid food, as well as those who require a nutritional supplement for life-stage, lifestyle or health reasons, such as advanced age, inactivity or poor appetite.

Boost Plus® is intended to be used only in accordance with accepted medical practice and should be used only for the purposes set out on the product label and on our website.

Again, we thank you for reaching out to us on this issue and providing us with the opportunity to respond.

Yours sincerely,



Rudolf Ramsauer
Corporate Communications Director

Rudolf Ramsauer
Senior Vice President, Nestlé Health
Sciences SA
Avenue Nestlé 55
CH-1800 Vevey
Switzerland

**Directorate of Professional
Activities**

6 August 2013

Dear Mr Ramsauer

Use of Nestlé Health Sciences product in force-feeding detainees at Guantánamo Bay

Thank you for your letter of 31 July. The BMA is encouraged that Nestlé is taking the concerns of the international medical community seriously.

As you state in your letter, "Boost Plus is intended to be used only in accordance with accepted medical practice". We presume that your company has made direct enquiries with the US Department of Defense in order to ascertain whether Boost Plus is being used by the US military in the force-feeding of detainees at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base, as recommended at page 16 of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Whether or not your product is currently being used for this purpose, its inclusion in the SOP continues to implicate Boost Plus and Nestlé in a practice which is in gross violation of internationally accepted standards of medical ethics and which amounts to a form of inhuman and degrading treatment.

You will no doubt be aware of the successful efforts of several global pharmaceutical companies – for example Lundbeck and Fresenius Kabi – in preventing their products from being used to carry out the death penalty by lethal injection. These companies have received public congratulation for their efforts and, in turn, have benefited from improvements in their reputational standing, including among the international medical community.

The BMA urges you to make public your assertion that Boost Plus should only be used in accordance with accepted medical practice and to take active steps to prevent it being used in the force-feeding of detainees at Guantánamo Bay.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Professor Vivienne Nathanson
Director of Professional Activities

Chief Executive/Secretary: Tony Bourne