

# Putting Nutrition at the Heart of Patient Care

## Government Initiatives to Reduce Plastic Waste and Improve Sustainability

Packaging, and in particular plastic, plays an integral role throughout the supply chain in storing, preserving and protecting the foods and drinks we consume, thus playing a key role in preventing food waste and maintaining high quality food standards. The quality and safety requirements of products often dictate the need for plastic – it is robust and helps to prevent spoilage or damage as well as loss of product, and can be easily sterilised. However, the widespread use of single-use plastics, including in healthcare, has become an increasing concern and the Government is introducing a number of initiatives to reduce their use and encourage more environmentally friendly materials for packaging. BSNA and its members are committed to the responsible and sustainable use of plastic and packaging across the supply chain.

### Green Claims Code

The Competition and Markets Authority has published a Green Claims Code to help businesses understand and comply with their existing obligations under consumer protection law when making environmental claims, with a list of principles for accurate claims, and a checklist that businesses can follow when publishing 'green claims'.<sup>2</sup> The code came into effect on 20 September 2021. The principles set out in the code are:

- Claims must be truthful and accurate.
- Claims must be clear and unambiguous.
- Claims must not omit or hide important relevant information.
- Comparisons must be fair and meaningful.
- Claims must consider the full life cycle of the product or service.
- Claims must be substantiated.

BSNA and its members are committed to abiding to the Green Claims Code and to working with government and key stakeholders to improve infrastructure, regulation and practice around packaging to ensure sustainability throughout the entire packaging supply chain.

References: 1. HM Revenue & Customs. (2022). Plastic Packaging Tax. Accessed online: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/plastic-packaging-tax](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/plastic-packaging-tax) (January 2022) 2. Competition and Markets Authority. (2021). Green Claims Code. Accessed online: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-claims-code-making-environmental-claims](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-claims-code-making-environmental-claims) (January 2022)

### About the British Specialist Nutrition Association

BSNA is the trade association representing the manufacturers of products designed to meet the particular nutritional needs of individuals; these include specialist products for infants and young children (including infant formula, follow-on formula, young child formula and complementary weaning foods), medical nutrition products for diseases, disorders and medical conditions, including oral nutritional supplements, enteral tube feeding and parenteral nutrition, as well as companies who aseptically compound chemotherapy, parenteral nutrition and CIVAS.

### Plastic Packaging Tax

The Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT) is a new environmental tax in the UK on plastic which will come into effect from 1 April 2022.<sup>1</sup> The tax is designed to increase the use of recycled plastic by applying a levy to any plastic packaging which contains less than 30% recycled plastic. This will affect all manufacturers and importers of plastic packaging, including importers of packaging which already contain goods. The tax will be charged at £200 per metric tonne of plastic packaging.

### Exemptions

There are four types of packaging component which are exempt from the tax, these are:

- Plastic packaging manufactured or imported for use in the immediate packaging of a medicinal product.
- Transport packaging used on imported goods.
- Packaging used as aircraft, ship and rail stores.
- Components that are permanently designated or set aside for use other than a packaging use.

Products which BSNA represent, including medical foods and medical devices, are not currently exempt from the PPT. BSNA and our members support initiatives that aim to protect the environment by reducing the production and use of plastic. However, due to the nature of medical foods and medical devices, it can be challenging to use recycled material as these products have to be safe, sterile and have a long shelf life without degrading to ensure maintenance of essential nutrients.

BSNA member companies are committed to producing recyclable packaging and contributing as little waste as possible in the manufacture and supply of products, with many lines of company portfolios working towards becoming 100% recyclable.