

October 11, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: The Food and Drug Administration’s Comprehensive, Multi-Year Nutrition Innovation Strategy; Public Meeting; Request for Comments, 83 Fed. Reg. 30180 (June 27, 2018), Docket No. FDA–2018–N–2381]

Herein, the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA), the 137-year-old trade association representing U.S. manufacturers and distributors of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and dietary supplements (chpa.org), provides feedback on the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA’s) Nutrition Innovation Strategy, particularly as it relates to the agency’s development and implementation of a consumer education campaign.

At a public meeting held on July 26, 2018 to discuss implementation of the Nutrition Innovation Strategy, FDA discussed this broad initiative intended to promote public health through efforts to empower consumers to make better and more informed decisions about their diets and health, foster the development of healthier food options, and expand the opportunities to use nutrition to reduce morbidity and mortality due to chronic disease. Topics of discussion during the meeting included updating standards of identity, naming of ingredients and consumer education surrounding the updated Nutrition/Supplement Facts labels.

In a breakout session intended to review the FDA’s Nutrition Facts Label Consumer Education Campaign, discussion primarily centered on encouraging healthy eating and how to get consumers to make better food choices including through the use of influencers via social media. There was limited discussion about the FDA’s stated intent to highlight changes to Nutrition/Supplement Facts labeling through consumer education.

In a Final Rule addressing revision of Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labeling,¹ FDA noted that “...a consumer education and outreach campaign will assist in making the new food label a successful tool in continuing to help consumers to make healthy food and beverage choices” and that

¹ FDA Final Rule, Food Labeling: Revision of the Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labels, Fed. Reg. 81(103) @33750; May 27, 2016

“[o]ur intent is to update our existing educational materials and create new educational opportunities to explain how to use the label to help consumers make healthy dietary choices, with an emphasis on each of the new changes of the label.”

CHPA asks that the agency maintain a focus on the consumer education campaign related to the specific changes in Nutrition and Supplement Facts labeling as noted in the May 27, 2016 Final Rule on Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labeling. This campaign would benefit both those who look to the Nutrition Facts label to help determine their caloric needs as well as the significant number of consumers who use dietary supplements. Consumer understanding of these changes will help to enhance healthy dietary patterns and fulfill a stated goal of the agency.

In addition, FDA further stated in the Final Rule that they intended to create partnership opportunities with organizations interested in nutrition education and health promotion (including governmental agencies, professional organizations, manufacturers and retailers). We feel this type of effort would be of benefit, particularly with retailers, who may be in a position to educate consumers on products and changes to Supplement Facts labeling.

CHPA and our member companies marketing dietary supplement products appreciate the opportunity to comment on this process. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay Sirois". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Jay Sirois, Ph.D.
Senior Director, Regulatory & Scientific Affairs
Consumer Healthcare Products Association