

# INFORMATION PRODUCTION POLICY

## INFORMATION PRODUCTION

Breast Cancer UK works hard to ensure that all of the public facing information we produce is of high quality, is evidence based, is accurate, balanced, trustworthy, and relevant and addresses users' needs.

All in scope information, published either in print or online, that is designed to provide health or science information to members of the public, is done so in accordance with Breast Cancer UK's Information Production Policy and Evidence Sources Policy and must follow the Information Production Process and Literature Research Process outlined in separate documents.

## SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy and its accompanying processes apply to Breast Cancer UK's scientific background briefings which are published online under the Science and Research pages and those daughter documents, videos or webpages determined by these background briefing papers found under the Reduce Your Risk pages on the Breast Cancer UK website. Where these same documents are reproduced in print or other media such as film or infographics these shall also be regarded as being in scope. This is the information that we provide to members of the public about the preventable risk factors for breast cancer.

For the purposes of the Information Standard, this policy does not apply to the production of public policy positions, consultation submissions, press releases, blogs or correspondence. Whilst all of the above are produced to the highest standard and often using the content generated by the background briefings, these publications are intended to convey our policy positions on specific issues and are not intended to provide public health information or scientific information relating to public health to members of the public.

## RELEVANCE

Breast Cancer UK will only produce publications and information that are relevant and in line with our charitable objectives.

Our charitable objectives are as follows:

- Advancing health and saving lives by seeking to reduce the incidence of breast cancer by identifying its causes and encouraging a preventative approach.
- Advancing the education of the public (including patients, their families, the medical research establishment and others) about the causes, impact and prevention of breast cancer.
- Collating, conducting or commissioning research (including the analysis of clinical data and research) into the causes and treatment of breast cancer, and to publish the results thereof.

As such our publications aim to: educate consumers, members of the public and policy makers about the causes of breast cancer and particularly focus on the preventable causes of breast cancer. In particular, we present the scientific case in support of our concerns that unnecessary exposure to potentially harmful chemicals could be contributing to an increased risk of breast cancer; and, give advice as to how people can reduce their risk of breast cancer by reducing exposures to potentially harmful chemicals or adopting different lifestyle choices.

Breast Cancer UK is not a medical organisation and we do not provide counselling, medical advice or health information pertaining to the clinical or medical diagnosis or treatment of breast cancer.

## EVIDENCE SOURCES

Breast Cancer UK is committed to producing information based on good quality evidence and will use sources we regard to be of good or high quality.

All publications will be fully researched and referenced using only relevant, trustworthy and up to date evidence as outlined in the Evidence Sources Policy.

A log of evidence reviewed but not used for reasons cited in the Evidence sources policy must also be kept. References relating to evidence felt not to be good quality, or out of date, or flawed, or offering no additional information, will be kept in order to demonstrate Breast Cancer UK's commitment to exploring the widest range of data possible. These will be listed in excel files and/or as screen shots of search results, with references not used clearly highlighted.

The Evidence Sources Policy will be reviewed annually in February each year by the Science Committee.

## BALANCE AND BIAS

We recognise that there remains uncertainty and debate about the causes of breast cancer and more particularly which chemicals may be linked to breast cancer and the extent of the risk they pose. The Evidence Sources Policy outlines ways in which we will reduce bias when compiling evidence to support our publications.

All in-scope publications will be clear where uncertainties or differences of opinion exist based on the most up to date research. Studies that reach different conclusions will be cited, provided they conform to the reference criteria outlined below.

In order to help ensure our publications achieve the right balance and are not unduly bias, balance and bias will be assessed at all stages of the information production process.

- At the outset uncertainties and potential issues of contention will be flagged in the Publication Checklist;
- the author will be aware of bias and balance in the collation of evidence and in writing the draft publication (see Evidence Sources Policy);
- All independent peer reviewers will be asked specifically whether the information strikes the correct balance and takes into consideration alternative views.
- Balance will also form part of the User Testing Feedback Questionnaire.

In the unlikely event that any conflicts of interest arise in the production of an in scope publication, these would be fully explained on the publication itself. Breast Cancer UK however are an independent charity and would never endorse products or companies in any scope publications.

#### USE OF IMAGES

All images used in our publications and on our website will be assessed for their suitability, credited as appropriate and permission secured to reproduce where required. We will always endeavour to ensure that images accurately reflect the subject matter in hand.

#### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In line with the charity's [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#), all those involved in the Information Production Process will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the charity on the one hand and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. In the context of the Information Production Process, this means that anyone involved in the production of information for Breast Cancer UK (e.g. author or peer reviewer or external evaluator/user tester) must make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships and posts held that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. Each reviewer must declare any conflicts of interest on their evaluation forms.

A conflict of interest would be considered to arise where there is personal conflict such as a potential financial or measurable benefit directly to the author or peer reviewer, or indirectly through a connected person OR where an author, peer reviewer or contributor find their role and duty to Breast Cancer UK competes with their role(s) or duty in other organisations. Where such a conflict of interest is considered to arise, that person will be removed from their role in the production process and replaced with another individual who has no conflict of interest.

#### REFERENCES

All publications will be fully referenced. Where the nature of the publication renders full detailed references impractical, these will be made available on the website and this information made clear on the publication itself.

All references shall contain the name of the first author, date of publication, title of the research paper, or book chapter, evidence source such as the journal name, volume and page numbers or website and the date the source was accessed, if via a website. Where possible we will include a website address which links to the abstract or full text (if open access).

All evidence used will be kept on file.

#### INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW

Breast Cancer UK seeks to ensure the information contained in its publications and references used are accurate and up to date and that the information is presented in a clear and balanced manner. We will therefore ensure that all principle publications that contain scientific information and/or health advice will be subject to independent peer review, as overseen by the Independent Science Panel. Peer reviewers will be asked to review the information, make detailed comments on the documents, and assess the information for balance, accuracy and relevance.

All documents will undergo review from at least two independent reviewers. Peer reviewers will be sourced from members of the Independent Science Panel, a known academic, expert in the field, or contact of the organisation, with known experience in the relevant area. No Peer reviewer will be chosen who has any potential conflict of interest.

Spin off documents, blogs and comments or opinion published on social media or our website which are founded on original peer reviewed (principle) publications, need not be peer reviewed, as long as the key messages and sentiment is backed up by one of Breast Cancer UK's principle peer reviewed documents.

## USER UNDERSTANDING AND INVOLVEMENT

Breast Cancer UK's educational information aims to appeal to a broad spectrum of the population (e.g. we aim to reach women both young and old and from across the demographic spectrum, we also aim to reach many men, in particular fathers or guardians who have the health and welfare of their families in mind).

Whilst the scientific messages behind the health information we provide are sometimes complex, we will work to ensure that it can be understood by a general public audience with little or no scientific background. All health information and advice will be provided at a basic literacy level.

We are committed to ensuring that the information we provide is written in plain English. All scientific terms must be explained either by the use of brackets or via a glossary of terms included in the publication. All publications will be subject to a Plain English check.

User needs and any specific target audiences will be considered at the outset of the production of any information materials and clearly outlined in the production brief along with any specific needs.

As much as possible we will involve target audience feedback at the start of the information production process. This will either be through the use of focus groups, analysis of annual survey results, informal discussions with user groups and Breast Cancer UK ambassadors or feedback via our ratings system on the website.

All publications must be user tested by a group or individuals who fall within the target audience prescribed in the publication brief. User testing will usually involve a questionnaire, but we also seek feedback in focus groups, over closed social media groups, informal conversations and also via ratings on our website.

Whilst Breast Cancer UK does not currently have the resources to produce many different versions of the same publication, we will make it clear on our website that should users with specific needs (i.e. visually impaired or English not as a first language) wish to access the information in a different format, they can make a request by phone or email. This should also be included in all printed publications. All design work, font sizes and colour pallets must be reviewed with accessibility in mind.

## PUBLICATION REVIEW AND REVISIONS

It is important to Breast Cancer UK that the information featured on our website and in print is current. All publications will be reviewed on a rolling 3 year basis, or sooner if appropriate. All principle publications will feature the publication date and any website version will also feature a review date. It is important that members of the public are able to view and read old publications, but where

publications are more than 3 years old and no longer being revised this will be stated on the webpage. If webpages are more than 10 years old, they may be removed from our website.

The Science Team of Breast Cancer UK will meet quarterly to monitor upcoming review dates, consider how the latest scientific information and legislation effects current publications and which publications will need revision in the following quarter as well as those that will require removing from the website and archiving.

#### FEEDBACK AND/OR COMPLAINTS

All publications must provide clear contact details to enable members of the public to feedback or complain about the publications contents. All webpages must also feature a ratings page to allow users to feedback thoughts and comments.

Any feedback or complaints directed at material produced by Breast Cancer UK in print or online are taken seriously and will be acted upon promptly. **All Complaints will be responded to with an initial response within three working days. Following full consideration and relevant research, a full response should be sent to the complainant within 2 weeks of receiving the complaint. Any remedial action required should be carried out within 2 weeks where possible.** All complaints will be dealt with in line with our [Moderation and Feedback/Complaints Process](#).

#### REVIEW OF THIS POLICY AND PROCESS

The Information Production Policy and Evidence Sources Policy will be reviewed annually in February of each year and approved by the Science Committee. The Information Production Process, Literature Review Process and Moderation and Complaints Process will be reviewed by the Science team and approved by the CEO at least annually (in February of each year), although suggestions for improvements can be discussed at each quarterly meeting and included within the process as appropriate and subject to the approval of the CEO.

***This policy was last updated in February 2018***

***It is next due for review in February 2019 by the Science Committee***