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BREASTFEEDING ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR FAST ACTION ON PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Australian Breastfeeding Association welcomes the report released yesterday by the parliamentary breastfeeding inquiry committee, but says the federal government needs to act quickly and decisively on the recommendations to really make a difference.

“This is a good start,” says Margaret Grove, the President of the Association. “We know that most mothers want to breastfeed. Once implemented, the inquiry’s recommendations will help remove the barriers to mothers’ ability to continue to feed.”

“The inquiry was obviously needed, judging by the close to 500 submissions received. The government needs to lead the way by following up these recommendations and ensuring they are implemented,” says Grove.

“The Association especially welcomes the recommendation for funding to expand its current 24-hour state-based breastfeeding help lines to become a toll-free national service. We receive over 250,000 calls from mothers annually and it is the third largest helpline in Australia.”

As Australia’s leading provider of breastfeeding information and education, the Association also welcomes further funding for a national education campaign and expansion of the Association’s Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation program.

“We also support the call for the more widespread establishment of human milk banks,” Grove says.

Whilst the Association’s submission to the inquiry has been broadly adopted, Grove calls on the government to enact legislation to protect mothers and babies from the aggressive and unethical marketing of breastmilk substitutes by commercial companies that the inquiry saw first hand.

“Australia has been a signatory to the World Health Organization Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes since 1981, but has failed to adequately implement this code,” she says.

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