



Case Report

1	Case Number	0186/17
2	Advertiser	Westside Dermatology
3	Product	Professional Service
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	10/05/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Physical Characteristics

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement features an image of a woman standing beside a man who has his arm raised up to reveal a sweaty armpit. The text reads, "This isn't the Pitt she was dreaming of".

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

The Westside Dermatology Billboard is makes fun of people suffering from a medical condition (scarring) for the benefit the success of their business. In particular, the Billboard suggests a female would be more beautiful "without her pitts". This to advertising is unnecessary and contributes to body image issues from someone who has suffered enough from a medical issue.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

Thank you for your correspondence where you indicate that there has been a complaint regarding our Billboard in Central Station.

The advertisement has been on display for approximately 15 months.

We have utilised the busy train station environment to best engage with commuters and the public who could have issues with excessive sweating, and informed them that we have a permanent/lasting solution available.

This artwork has had ample positive feedback from our patients as well as many people who have simply seen the advertisement and been kind enough to let us know.

The advertisement is not related to scarring in any way and certainly does not suggest that this woman is better off 'without her pitts'. The use of the word Pitt is a word play on the name 'Brad Pitt' not scarring or the woman's pits.

We deal with patients with excessive sweating on a daily basis and know first-hand how finding solutions can be extremely difficult. Miladry is relatively new technology and provides a more permanent solution for hyperhidrosis than the more traditional treatment of 'Botox' injections.

We do not believe the advertisement has breached Section 2 of the code.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement makes fun of people with a medical condition and suggests the woman in the advertisement would be more attractive 'without her pitts'.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Board noted that this billboard advertisement features an image of a woman standing underneath the raised arm of a man who has been sweating, and the text reads, 'This isn't the Pitt she was dreaming of'.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement makes fun of people with a medical condition (scarring). The Board noted that the reference to 'Pitt' in the advertisement is a play on words between the armpit of the man depicted, and the universal attraction of the actor Brad Pitt to many women. The Board noted the advertised service is a medical solution to excessive sweating and considered that there is no mention or suggestion of pitting caused by acne.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement suggests the woman

would be more attractive 'without her pitts' and considered that the advertisement does not make any reference to the appearance of the woman, or the man, and does not suggest that this woman could or should be more attractive.

Overall the Board considered that the complainant's interpretation of the advertisement is unlikely to be shared by the broad community.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of physical appearance or gender and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.