



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Ad Standards Limited
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Case Report

1. Case Number :	0362-20
2. Advertiser :	Laser Clinics Australia
3. Product :	Slimming
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	App
5. Date of Determination	16-Dec-2020
6. DETERMINATION :	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.6 Health and Safety

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This advertisement appeared on the Spotify app. There are several versions with different layouts, however all contain an image of a woman's midsection. She is wearing a white crop top and pants and is grasping her skin. The accompanying text states "Freeze away the bits that won't budge".

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

The model in this advertisement is "very toned" (photoshop), a very healthy body weight, and certainly in the slim range of healthy. She has the type of body many women would envy / strive for, yet Laser Clinics are suggesting even women with this body shape and size should be unhappy with their body and wanting to get rid of this "unwanted fat" (implication: excess fat).

This ad is a constant presence on my Spotify lately. It's a horrible message to send on a platform that many young women use, reinforcing unrealistic and harmful (and for many unhealthy) body weight standards. This particular version is also much more exaggerated than other Laser Clinics ads for the same product that I could find online (the model pinching "fat" is much more toned in this ad).



As an educator who has worked with young women I know how harmful exaggerated & unrealistic images like this are, particularly when exposure is repeated / constant. Therefore I find the image + text combination in this ad unacceptable.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Advertiser did not provide a response.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether the advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement suggests that people of a healthy body weight such as the woman depicted should still be unhappy with their body shape and still need to lose weight or fat, and that that message reinforces unrealistic and harmful body weight standards.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser did not respond.

Section 2.6: Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

The Panel noted the Practice Note to Section 2.6 which states:

BODY IMAGE: Advertising must not portray an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices. Unrealistic ideal body image: Advertising that provides an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices, which is not justifiable in the context of the product or service being advertised, will be contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety.

An unrealistic ideal body image may occur where the overall theme, visuals or language used in the advertisement imply that:

- a body shape, or feature, of the kind depicted (e.g. very thin or very muscular) is required to use the product or service or to participate in an activity associated with the product or service;*
- those people who do not have a body shape, or feature, of the kind depicted cannot use the product or service, or participate in a particular activity; or*



- *those people who do not have a body shape, or feature, of the kind depicted should alter their body shape, or features, before they can use the product or service, or participate in a particular activity.*

An unrealistic ideal body image may also occur where models are depicted in a way that:

- *promotes unhealthy practices*
- *presents an unrealistic body image as aspirational; or*
- *is reasonably likely to cause pressure to conform to a body shape that is unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices (such as diet or physical activities), unless such depictions are justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.*

BODY SIZE: The Code does not require the use of ‘healthy weight’ models as this term could exclude people in smaller or larger bodies from advertising, by unnecessarily limiting the portrayal of diversity in society. As such, advertisements may include a diversity of images, including people who have a variety of sizes and shapes, but advertisers should take care to avoid images of people with extreme body weights or shapes that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices which are not justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised, and which are contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety.

While the use of people in smaller or larger bodies is itself not necessarily problematic, advertisers must ensure that models do not adopt a pose or are not depicted in a way which produces an unrealistic sense of body image, for example through the style of the advertising, the clothing, lighting, or make-up used.

The Panel considered that while some members of the community may prefer that advertisers of this type of body sculpting product not use images of ‘very toned’ models, advertisers are entitled to use whatever type of representative image they wish, provided that such imagery does not breach the Code.

The Panel considered that the woman depicted in the advertisement does not appear to be of a weight or size that is not realistically attainable through healthy practices, or has been edited using photoshop techniques.

The Panel noted that there is significant community concern on the issue of body image, but considered that the advertisement does not make a suggestion that people of a certain size should use the service, and does not suggest that people of a certain size should alter their body.

In the Panel’s opinion there is no suggestion that a person’s worth or value is related to their body size or shape.

Section 2.6 conclusion



The Panel considered that the advertisement did not contain material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety and determined that it did not breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

Conclusion

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