

NFTHD #105: Using the Term “New” in Promotional Material

In this *Notes from the Help Desk*, we address a common question about whether, and for how long, the term “new” may be used to describe a product in company promotional materials.

Code Edition 20 does not explicitly define when a product may - or may no longer - be described as “new.” As a principles-based Code, it places responsibility on companies to exercise sound judgement when using positive or simplified descriptors.

The key consideration in this context is [Principle 3](#), which requires companies to ensure that information about products is current, accurate, balanced, and scientifically valid, and supports their appropriate use.

Industry practice has traditionally understood “new” to refer to a period of up to 12 months. Earlier guidance, although no longer in effect and not binding, provides useful insight into accepted industry standards, where “new” has typically been used in connection with defined milestones such as initial registration or PBS listing.

Using the term “new” beyond 12 months carries an increased risk of inaccuracy or misleading implication. Products that have been registered or promoted for more than a year are unlikely to be perceived as “new” by healthcare professionals, and continued use of the term may compromise accuracy.

Where a product has been registered for 12 months but only recently become available for prescribing, common sense can be applied. While the product is not new to the ARTG, it may reasonably be described as new to market. In these circumstances, any use of the term “new” should be accurate and clearly limited to market availability, and should not imply recent registration.

Ultimately, “new” is not an enduring descriptor. Repeated or prolonged use—particularly beyond 12 months—undermines accuracy and increases both compliance and reputational risk. When considering whether use of the term is appropriate, companies should focus on accuracy, context, and how a reasonable healthcare professional is likely to understand the material. Decisions should be guided by the principles of the Code rather than fixed timeframes, although the 12-month benchmark remains a useful reference point where a practical yardstick is needed.

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