

Minutes of proceedings of the Inaugural Meeting of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Monday 15th January 2018

Present: Professor Suresh Pillai (Chairman), Dr Gerard Colleran, Professor Blanaid Daly, Dr Brett Duane, Dr Una Fallon, Dr Máiréad Harding, Mr Michael Madden, Dr Therese Montgomery, Dr Patrick Quinn, Dr Marie Sutton, Mr Ray Parle

In attendance: From Secretariat: Ms Patricia Gilsenan O'Neill (Director)
Ms Etain Kett

Apologies: None

EB Minute 01/18: Apologies

There were no apologies

EB Minute 02/18: Introduction and Briefing from Chairman

All members introduced themselves and outlined their area of expertise.

Professor Suresh Pillai . Chemistry and Toxicology

Dr Gerard Colleran . Microbiology

Professor Blanaid Daly . Special Care Dentistry

Dr Brett Duane . Public Health Dentistry

Dr Una Fallon . Public Health Medicine

Dr Máiréad Harding . Epidemiology Fluorides and Health

Mr Michael Madden . Engineering

Dr Therese Montgomery . Biological Sciences/Toxicology

Dr Marie Sutton . Medical Research

Mr Ray Parle . Environmental Health

Dr Patrick Quinn . Healthcare Ethics and Law

It was suggested a position paper be prepared by end of 2018 and that members review literature in their area of expertise for the years 2017/2018. It was agreed that a systematic approach must be taken in the review in order to reassure the public. It

was agreed that there needs to be an overarching framework and it was suggested that an information specialist be contacted in this regard.

It was suggested that online document sharing platforms might be used to facilitate remote work by members. It was agreed that these platforms must be secure.

EB Minute 03/18: Finance and Governance Briefing by Secretariat

It was noted that all members have responsibilities under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016), including disclosure of interest and conflict of interest. It was further noted that members must make the Secretariat aware of any changes regarding disclosure of interest and to declare any conflicts of interest.

Governance issues such as communications, work practices, confidentiality and the Freedom of Information Act 2014 were noted.

It was noted that Performance Delivery Agreements are to be established by the Minister and Department of Health.

It was noted that it is expected that the Secretariat Costs Budget 2018 will remain the same as Budget 2017.

EB Minute 04/18: Correspondence

Correspondence received was noted.

EB Minute 05/18: Expert Body Structure and Work Plan

The Terms of Reference were discussed and it was agreed to contact the Department of Health for further clarification.

It was suggested that that it might be useful to ask the former Chairs of the sub-committees to attend the next meeting and give a briefing to the new members.

It was agreed that Dr Marie Sutton would prepare a summary regarding the guiding points, main themes and search strategy used in the Health Research Board Report Health Effects of Water Fluoridation . An evidence review 2015q

It was noted that a study regarding the cost-effectiveness of water fluoridation is currently underway. It was suggested that if required a specialist in Health Economics might be co-opted to the Expert Body.

It was suggested that the expert body would prepare a position paper on the recent advances on water fluoridation.

It was noted that media training might be required in order to fulfil the Terms of Reference.

Dr Brett Duane was elected as Vice-Chair of the Expert Body.

EB Minute 06/18: Handover from former Expert Body (Briefing by Chairman and Secretariat)

It was noted that the former Expert Body had referred the paper \pm Prenatal Fluoride Exposure and Cognitive Outcomes in Children at 4 and 6. 12 Years of Age in Mexicoq Bashash et al 2017, to an epidemiologist for review and that Parliamentary Questions and Reps would be responded to once the review has been considered by the Expert Body.

Dr Máiréad Harding declared a conflict of interest regarding discussions on Fluoride and Caring for Children's Teeth Study (FACCT) and the associated KEDS project and excluded herself from the proceedings. It was agreed that the Expert Body would request an update from the Oral Health Services Research Centre, University College Cork, regarding the KEDS project.

It was noted that Irish Water (IW) has stated that an important aspect in the distribution of the Code of Practice (CoP) relates to training. IW will be discussing with the HSE the possibility of running training workshops for their own design specification, standard operating procedure, and the CoP, with Local Authority staff, Environmental Health Officers, etc.

It was noted that the Tender for the Supply & Delivery of Hydrofluosilicic Acid has been awarded.

It was noted that the Total Fluoride Intake Study and the Position Statement regarding the Safety of Fluoride Exposure for the Developing Foetus in Ireland will be published shortly by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

It was noted that the Expert Body website and Frequently Asked Questions section on the website will be reviewed.

EB Minute 07/18: AOB

It was noted that a review of National Oral Health Policy was underway and it was agreed that there was an obligation under the Terms of Reference to make a request to the Department of Health for sight of the Draft Oral Health Policy with regard to any aspect of it that might relate to fluorides and health.

EB Minute 08/18: Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 14:15pm. It was agreed that the Secretariat would circulate dates for the first 2 weeks in March for the next Meeting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____