

Minutes of proceedings of the Plenary Meeting of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Tuesday 11th December 2018

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

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

Apologies: Dr Gerard Colleran, Professor Blanaid Daly

EB Minute 29/18: Apologies

Apologies were noted.

EB Minute 30/18: Expert Body Minutes

The minutes from the meeting of September 5th 2018 were agreed, subject to minor amendments.

EB Minute 31/18: Matters Arising

It was noted that Professor Helen Whelton had made a presentation ~~at~~ Global Consensus on Unacceptable Fluorosis to Inform Fluoride Intake Decisions ~~at~~ the IADR 96th General Session, London, and it was agreed to invite her to present to the Expert Body.

EB Minute 32/18: Correspondence

Correspondence was noted. It was noted that a clear and informed response had been sent to Cork County Council regarding its motion on water fluoridation. It was further noted that there are some inaccuracies on what Councillor Diarmuid O Cadhla has stated in an article in the Evening Echo ~~Councillors call for fluoridation of water to be optional~~

EB Minute 33/18: Finance

It was noted that Secretariat Costs are within budget. It was further noted that Budget 2019 should be received in February 2019 and that required extra funding for attendance at relevant scientific conferences would be considered as part of this.

Any outstanding expenses for 2018 should be submitted by 12th December.

EB Minute 34/18: Expert Body Structure

The structure of the Expert Body was approved.

It was agreed that Sub-Committee meetings should take place in Q1 2019. The Chairs of the Sub-Committee were proposed and agreed as follows:

Dr Máiréad Harding . NEI Health

Mr Michael Madden . NEI Environment

Dr Brett Duane - Communications

It was suggested that some sub-committee meetings could be held remotely. It was noted that the Secretariat obtained information regarding online meeting services and it was agreed that Zoom is a good option for teleconferences as it reduces travel time, accidents and environmental impact.

It was noted that the first Dental Public Health Training Programme has been established by the Public Health Advisory Committee, and that a researcher/public health trainee will hold a 3 year post, it was suggested the Expert Body could be a work stream for this trainee and that the person might be co-opted onto one of the sub-committees.

EB Minute 35/18: Systematic Review

It was noted that the review programme Eppi Reviewer would be considered as part of the Systematic review, once the search strategy is complete. It was further noted that a site licence will be required for all Expert Body members.

It was agreed that it is important to also include the positive dental effects and positive systemic health effects in the systematic review.

Dr Brett Duane stepped out to attend another meeting.

It was agreed that precise wording is very important for the search strategy and that the question should be piloted and refined by the NEI Health Sub-Committee before the group meets.

It was agreed that the Grey Literature review is still to be kept under review by the Secretariat.

It was noted that Dr Patrick Quinn would circulate his paper on Ethics and Water Fluoridation.

It was agreed to invite Professor John Coggan to make a presentation to the Expert Body regarding public ethics as it would be important for a decision making framework. The meeting broke for lunch and Dr Brett Duane returned to the meeting

EB Minute 36/18: Department of Health

The Chair gave a briefing of a meeting with the Department of Health regarding fluorides and the draft Oral Health Policy.

EB Minute 37/18: Any Other Business

It was noted that media training may be required for members of the Communications Sub-Committee.

It was noted that the FAQ will be reviewed and this will be referred to the relevant sub-committee.

It was noted that Irish Water is currently considering an Asset Management Approach and that it is planned to amalgamate 500 water treatment plants into 300.

It was noted that the previous Expert Body made a submission to the Irish Water draft Lead in Drinking Water Mitigation Plan regarding Orthophosphate and had written to the HSE Drinking Water Group.

It was noted that the Secretariat would circulate the paper ~~When~~ public action undermines public health: a critical examination of antifuoridationist literatureq Armfield 2007.

It was noted that the Australian Medical Association supports water fluoridation and has launched an information campaign to highlight the significant public health benefits (The Guardian 30th October 2018).

It was noted that there is concern amongst local authority staff regarding privatisation of public water supplies (Irish Examiner 6th December 2018).

It was noted that the Secretariat would follow-up regarding training being developed by the Water Services National Training Group concerning the Code of Practice on the Fluoridation of Drinking Water 2016.

It was noted that Dr Una Fallon would follow-up with Dr Miriam Owens about the publication of the paper Osteosarcoma in Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland Owens & O'Herlihy 2009.

It was noted that the report Evidence Review for Adverse Health Effects of Drinking Optimally Fluoridated Water (2010 - 2017) was recently published by Public Health Ontario and would be reviewed by the relevant sub-committee.

It was noted that Prenatal fluoride exposure and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms in children at 6-12 years of age in Mexico Bashash et al 2018, would be reviewed by the relevant sub-committee.

EB Minute 38/18: Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 15:05pm. It was agreed that the Secretariat would circulate dates for the next Meeting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____