



An Corpán Oilte Éireannach
um Fluairídí agus Sláinte

The Irish Expert Body
on Fluorides and Health

PO Box 12343, Dublin 18, Ireland T: +353 1 2136112 E: secretariat@dentalhealth.ie W: www.fluoridesandhealth.ie

Minutes of proceedings of the Plenary Meeting (Zoom) of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Wednesday 1st December 2021 @ 11am

Chairperson:	Mr Ray Parle
Present	Professor Máiréad Harding, Dr Therese Montgomery, Dr Gerard Colleran, Dr Lina Zgaga, Mr Mike Broderick
Quorum:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
In Attendance - Secretariat	Ms Orlaith Kennedy, Ms Etain Kett
EB Minute 39/21 Apologies:	Professor Blánaid Daly, Dr Patrick Quinn, Mr Michael Madden, Dr Úna Fallon

EB Minute 40/21: Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
There were no conflicts of interest.
EB Minute 41/21: Approval of the minutes of the meeting of [4th October 2021]:
The Minutes were approved subject to minor amendments.
EB Minute 42/21: Matters Arising
It was noted that letters were sent to the former Chair, Professor Suresh Pillai and former Vice-Chair Dr Brett Duane to thank them and acknowledge their contribution to the ongoing work of the Body since their beginning of term of office in 2017.
It was noted that Mr Ray Parle agreed to act as Interim Chair of the Expert Body and Professor Blánaid Daly as Vice-Chair.
It was noted that a memo was circulated by the Secretariat to EB Members regarding administration procedures going forward.
It was noted that Dr Therese Montgomery would make details available regarding the EUROTOX Conference.
EB Minute 43/21: Correspondence
Correspondence was noted. It was agreed to seek clarification from the Department of Health regarding commissioned research to be undertaken by the Health Research Board.



Report on activities:

EB Minute 44/21: Report of the Sub-Committees

NEI Health Sub-Committee: Report

It was agreed to follow-up with the Department of Health regarding Expert Body correspondence concerning gaps/ further areas of research in Ireland which need to be considered.

Correspondence from the HRB was discussed, and it was agreed that further clarification was required in some areas.

Microbiome is to be included on the agenda for the next NEI Health Sub-Committee Meeting. Dr Gary Moran is assisting in the identification and appraisal of the evidence currently available.

Papers have been assigned to the subcommittee and are currently being reviewed by the members.

The *Draft Position Statement* was submitted to the Department of Health and the Expert Body is awaiting feedback.

The Chair of the NEI Health subcommittee led the EB draft submission document to the WHO Discussion Paper 'Draft Global Strategy on Oral Health' (2021) which was sent to the Department of Health in advance of the submission date. It was agreed to discuss this with the Department of Health.

Dr Zgaga accepted the invitation to become a member of the NEI Health Sub-Committee. It was noted that Dr Zgaga will provide expertise in the areas of epidemiology and statistics.

It was noted that evidence reviewed to date does not give any reason to change the advice concerning water fluoridation policy in Ireland.

It was suggested to review any new and emerging evidence regarding Covid19 and fluoride and to include it in the search terms.

It was suggested that there may be gaps in research regarding exposure to fluoride, including dermal absorption and it was agreed to follow-up on this.

NEI Environment Sub-Committee Report:

Mr Mike Broderick was welcomed as a new member of the NEIE Sub-Committee.

The Irish Water representative on the Water Services Courseware Oversight Group will ensure that the Code of Practice on the Fluoridation of Drinking Water is circulated to the Local Authorities.



Mr Ray Parle has contacted the EPA to arrange the annual liaison meeting with the NEI Environment sub-committee to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Developments in alternative technology for Water Fluoridation in the United States of America (USA), namely the use of sodium fluorosilicate tablets, and with reference to potential applicability to smaller public water supplies in Ireland, will be included in the Agenda of the next NEIE Sub-Committee Meeting. Further clarification will be required whether this system would be suitable for smaller schemes in the Republic of Ireland. It was agreed that an engineer would have to review this tablet system and that the Department of Health will need to be informed of any developments. The Sub-Committee will also bring this to the attention of the Environmental Protection Agency and Irish Water.

Irish Water has included fluoride testing in its Ground Water Monitoring Programme and this will be discussed at the next NEIE Sub-Committee Meeting. It was noted that the EPA published a report on Ground Water contaminants and that a link to this would be circulated to members.

It was suggested that further research into the Dermal absorption of fluoride in water may be required as currently there is no reliable data in the European Chemical Agency Database.

It was noted that a paper regarding high fluoride-resistant bacteria present in water (in South India) has just been published. It was agreed to monitor any new and emerging issues regarding this, and that Dr Ger Colleran would contact Dr Gary Moran in this regard.

It was agreed that the Frequently Asked Questions section would be updated with any issues as appropriate.

Communications Sub-Committee

Dr Patrick Quinn has agreed to Chair the Communications Sub-Committee.

It was noted that Mr Ger Colleran would join the Communications Sub-Committee.

It was agreed to continue to keep the Expert Body website under review and update as appropriate.

It was noted that the sub-committee will discuss and review the infographics from the Fluoride and Caring for Children's Teeth (FACCT) Study to inform any required updates to the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Expert Body website.

EB Minute 45/21: Expert Body Work Plan

The Work Plan for 2022 was discussed and each sub-committee will discuss its own relevant section.

It was agreed that filling the current vacancies in the membership is important in progressing the Work Plan in 2022, and to ensure the multidisciplinary approach of the Expert Body.



It was noted that the progress on the Work Plan 2021 would be discussed at the forthcoming sub-committee meetings.

EB Minute 46/21: Any other business (AOB)

It was noted that a Bill on Water Fluoridation (New Zealand) has passed its third and final reading.

It was noted that the World Health Organization has recently included fluoride toothpaste and silver diamine fluoride on its list of essential medicines.

EB Minute 47/21: Next Meeting

Date:

The chairperson thanked those all for attending.
The meeting was declared closed at 13:22pm and it was agreed that the next meeting will take place remotely in the first half of February 2022, a doodle poll will be circulated. It was agreed to have a face-to-face meeting when it was possible to do so.

Actions Arising from This Meeting:

Item No.	Action	Person Applicable	Timeframe
43/21	It was agreed to seek clarification from the Department of Health regarding commissioned research to be undertaken by the Health Research Board.	Chair/Chair NEIH SUB-Committee/Secretariat	December 2021
44/21	Follow-up with the Department of Health regarding Expert Body correspondence concerning gaps/ further areas of research in Ireland which need to be considered.	Chair/Secretariat	December 2021
44/21	Microbiome is to be included on the agenda for the next NEI Health Sub-Committee Meeting.	Professor Máiréad Harding, Secretariat	TBC



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44/21	Papers have been assigned to the subcommittee and are currently being reviewed by the members.	Dr Therese Montgomery	TBC
44/21	Microbiome is to be included on the agenda for the next NEI Health Sub-Committee Meeting.	Professor Máiréad Harding/Dr Gary Moran	December 2021
44/21	Papers to be reviewed by the NEI Health members.	NEI Health Members	December 2021
44/21	Follow-up on gaps in research regarding exposure to fluoride, including dermal absorption.	Mr Ray Parle	By next meeting
44/21	Monitor any new and emerging evidence regarding Covid19 and fluoride and to include it in the search terms.	Secretariat/All	Ongoing
44/21	Follow-up with the EPA to arrange the annual liaison meeting with the NEI Environment sub-committee to discuss issues of mutual concern.	Mr Ray Parle	TBC
44/21	Follow-up on developments in alternative technology for Water Fluoridation	Mr Ray Parle	TBC
44/21	Irish Water Ground Water Monitoring Programme to be discussed at the next NEIE Sub-Committee Meeting.	Mr Ray Parle	TBC
44/21	Circulate the EPA report on Ground Water and contaminants circulated to members.	Mr Ray Parle	December 2021
44/21	Monitor any new and emerging issues regarding high fluoride-resistant bacteria present in water.	Dr Ger Colleran, Dr Gary Moran	Ongoing



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44/21	Update the Frequently Asked Questions section as appropriate. Discuss and review the infographics from the Fluoride and Caring for Children's Teeth (FACCT) Study to inform any required updates	All Sub-Committees Communications Sub-Committee	As required At next Communications Sub-Committee Meeting
45/21	Work Plan for 2022 Progress on the Work Plan 2021	All Sub-Committees All Sub-Committees/Chair/Secretariat	By next Plenary February 2022 December 2021
Chairperson's signature and date			