

## **Minutes of proceedings of the Plenary Meeting of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

**Present:** Dr Seamus O'Hickey (Chairman), Mr Ray Parle (Vice Chairman), Professor Denis O'Mullane, Professor John Clarkson, Ms Bernadette McDonnell, Mr Peter Henshaw

**In attendance: From Secretariat:** Ms Etain Kett, Ms Patricia Gilsenan O'Neill

**Apologies:** Mr Stephen McDermott, Mr Michael Kilcoyne

### **EB Minute 10/17: Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were noted.

### **EB Minute 11/17: Minutes of the last meeting (7<sup>th</sup> March 2017)**

The minutes from the meeting of March 7<sup>th</sup> 2017 were agreed subject to minor amendments.

### **EB Minute 12/17: Matters Arising**

It was noted that a response to a rep received by Deputy Simon Harris, Minister for Health concerning water fluoridation, has been answered.

### **EB Minute 13/17: Correspondence**

A report of all correspondence received since the last meeting was noted.

It was noted that the Department of Health had stated that expenditure related to the normal course of business of the Expert Body can continue.

It was agreed that the NEI Sub-Committee will review correspondence received concerning a query on fluoridation.

The Plenary approved correspondence to the Working Group on Best Health for Children.

## EB Minute 14/17: Report of Sub-committees

The Quality Assurance Sub-committee reported the following:

- It was noted that preparation for training regarding Irish Water documents (Design Specification for Fluoridation, Remote Asset Management Policy, and Standard Operating Procedures), and the CoP, is underway, and that it will go out to Tender.

The New and Emerging Issues Sub-committee reported the following:

- The NEI Sub-Committee's review of the published literature has not resulted in any findings which necessitated any alteration to the Expert Body advice to the Minister for Health. The papers do not impact or change the current practices on water fluoridation in the Republic of Ireland. The following papers were reviewed:

- **Community water fluoridation predicts increase in age adjusted incidence and prevalence of diabetes in 22 states from 2005 and 2010, Fluegge 2016**

It was noted that this paper would be brought to the attention of the Department of Health and to the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

- **'Does dental health of 6-year-olds reflect the reform of the Israeli dental care system?' Natapov et al 2016**

This paper does not change the advice from the Expert Body to the Minister for Health.

- **'The differences in healthcare utilization for dental caries based on the implementation of water fluoridation in South Korea', Cho et al 2016**

This is a very large study based on service data. It was agreed that a Health Economist be requested to review the paper.

- **‘The risk of enamel fluorosis and caries among Norwegian children, Implications for Norway and the United States’, Pendrys et al 2010**

These findings suggest that both risk of fluorosis development and caries-preventive benefit are associated with regular use of fluoride supplements, and caries prevention was associated with early use of a peasized amount of toothpaste.

- **‘Dental fluorosis in cohorts born before, during, and after the national salt fluoridation program in a community in Mexico’, Vallejos-Sa´nchez 2006**

This is a report of a cross section study conducted in Mexico in 1998, 7 years after the introduction of salt fluoridation in 1991.

The study appears to be well conducted, and the finding of an increase in fluorosis following the introduction of salt fluoridation is consistent with other studies.

- **‘Strategies to prevent oral disease in dependent older people (Protocol)’, Brocklehurst 2016**

This is a Protocol for the study, which will be published in due course.

- **‘Health Effects of Water Fluoridation: Evidence Evaluation Report’, report to the National Health and Medical Research Council, Canberra (2016)**

This is a systematic review of the dental effects of water fluoridation, including dental caries and dental fluorosis.

It was agreed that this was an important document for the new Expert Body and that it should also be brought to the attention of the Department of Health, the Health Research Board and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

- **‘Fluoride exposure in public drinking water and childhood and adolescent osteosarcoma in Texas’, Archer et al 2016**

This was reviewed by the National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) and it was agreed that the Expert Body Position Statement on Osteosarcoma be updated to take account of the views of NCCP on this paper.

- **‘Exploring the short-term impact of community water fluoridation cessation on children’s dental caries: a natural experiment in Alberta, Canada’, McLauren et al 2016**

This paper compared the short-term impact of community water fluoridation cessation on children’s dental caries in Edmonton (still fluoridated) and Calgary (cessation of water fluoridation in 2011).

An increase in primary tooth dental caries in Calgary was observed. It was agreed that this paper should be brought to the attention of the Department of Health and FACCT, as it states in the paper that *it is important to undertake subsequent oral health surveys to monitor and confirm these trends over time*.

- **‘Effectiveness of water fluoridation in the prevention of dental caries across adult age groups’, Do et al 2017**

This study confirms that lifetime access to community water fluoridation is associated with reduced tooth decay for adults and is strongest in the youngest adult age group 15-34 yrs old.

It was agreed that this should be brought to the attention of TILDA, the Department of Health and the HRB.

- The Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) contacted the Trading Standards UK regarding suggested rewording on the label of Aloe Vera Toothpaste. No further action will be taken by the NEI Sub-Committee.

- It was noted that the Expert Body FAQ is under review by the NEI Subcommittee.

- It was noted that the issue of reporting procedures for non-conformances was brought to the attention of the National Fluoridation Steering Committee.

- It was noted that the Food Safety Authority of Ireland is drafting a position statement on fluoride in response to a query to the FSAI.

### **EB Minute 15/17: Report of Executive Committee**

The Report of the Executive Committee was noted.

Secretariat Costs for January - March 2017 were reviewed. It was noted that Budget 2017 is expected shortly from the Department of Health.

It was noted the Secretarial Costs Expenditure for 2016 was within the allocation Budget.

### **EB Minute 16/17: Future Role of Expert Body**

It was noted the 21 Expressions of Interest had been received regarding membership of the new Expert Body and that assessment panels would be held in June. It was noted that Public Appointments Service guidelines and procedures are being followed in this regard. It is hoped that the new Expert Body will be in place by October/November.

### **EB Minute 17/17: AOB**

There was no AOB

### **EB Minute 18/17: Date of Next Meeting**

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 13:10pm. No date was set for the next meeting but it was noted that the next New and Emerging Issues Sub-Committee Meeting would take place in September.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_