

Minutes of proceedings of the Plenary Meeting of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Wednesday 5th September 2018

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

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

Apologies: Dr Gerard Colleran, Dr Patrick Quinn

EB Minute 19/18: Apologies

Apologies were noted.

A minutes silence was observed for Dr Brett Duane's Father.

EB Minute 20/18: Health Research Board

A presentation was given by Dr Marie Sutton regarding Health Effects of Water Fluoridation . an evidence review 2015q. Health Research Board (HRB) 2014. It was noted that Dr Sutton had led the team of researchers for this report and that the work had been peer-reviewed by external examiners from the UK and New Zealand. It was further noted that the report had examined the general health effects and not the dental effects of exposure to artificially fluoridated water at the range 0.4 . 1.5ppm.

The HRB searched literature from 2006 . 2014 and identified 2 seminal review papers - The York Review (Mc Donagh et al 2000) and the NHMRC Australia (2007). These are both highly respected, cited, very high quality with detailed methodology. The scope also included a search of grey literature to identify where issues of concern arose. It was noted that concerns regarding water fluoridation arose from endemic areas where natural levels of fluoride can be as high as 50ppm.

It was noted that a cohort study concerning IQ was very well done . Community water fluoridation and intelligence: prospective study in New Zealand . Broadbent et al 2014 Overall there is no definitive proof of protective or harmful effects.

It was noted that skeletal fluorosis is associated with endemic areas.

It was agreed that water fluoridation in the western areas of the USA should be monitored.

It was noted that Irish Water are considering online monitoring of fluoride levels.

It was further noted that the use of ground water may be considered due to the issue of water shortages. It was noted that water from Lough Erne, Northern Ireland is currently being used by a group scheme in the Republic of Ireland.

EB Minute 21/18: Expert Body Minutes

The minutes from the meeting of May 15th 2018 were agreed.

EB Minute 22/18: Matters Arising

It was noted that a request had been made to the Department of Health for access to the Draft Oral Health Policy. It was further noted that the Draft Oral Health Policy had been circulated to the Department of Housing.

It was agreed that the current way of working via the Secretariat regarding day to day work of the Expert Body and sub-committees worked well and would be continued.

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

EB Minute 23/18: Correspondence

Correspondence received was noted.

EB Minute 24/18: Finance

The Budget for 2018 was noted. It was agreed that a business case would be submitted to the Department of Health regarding required extra funding for attendance at relevant scientific conferences. It was noted that attendance at relevant conferences is linked to the Terms of Reference of the Expert Body.

EB Minute 25/18: Expert Body Structure

The draft structure of the Expert Body was discussed and it was agreed that sub-committee membership would need further consideration by the members.

It was agreed that the term high impact would be defined by the New and Emerging Issues . Health Sub-Committee.

It was suggested that some sub-committee meetings could be held remotely and it was agreed that the Secretariat would obtain information regarding online meeting services. It was agreed that email groups would be set up for each sub-committee.

Mr Michael Madden left to attend another meeting.

EB Minute 26/18: Systematic Review

It was agreed that Dr Patrick Quinn will liaise with Dr Brett Duane regarding legal terms for the search strategy, with the assistance of the librarian in Dublin Dental University Hospital, for review by the Expert Body, specifically:

Environmental - Professor Pillai

Dental . Dr Brett Duane

General Health . Dr Una Fallon and Dr Marie Sutton

Collaboration with an information specialist will also be considered.

It was agreed that Dr Sutton will consult with the information specialist in the Health Research Board to ensure that the search strategy is in line with the Health Research Board Report.

It was suggested that a review programme such as Eppi Reviewer might be used to aid this process and this would be costed by the Secretariat.

It was noted that the full papers obtained from the search strategy will be reviewed by the relevant sub-committees.

It was agreed that non-English papers be included in the systematic search.

EB Minute 27/18: AOB

It was noted that a new drinking water Directive is being drafted and that there is no proposal to change the parametric limit value for fluoride.

It was noted that Professor Helen Whelton had made a presentation 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.

It was noted that the American Association for Dental Research have published policy statements regarding water fluoridation.

It was noted that two judgments delivered from the New Zealand Supreme Court, rejected three appeals by New Health New Zealand Inc. These appeals arose from High Court rejection of challenges by New Health NZ to prevent South Taranaki District Council from fluoridating drinking water.

It was noted that ~~S~~Should food and drink have fluoride labels? qZohoori and Maguire had been recently published. It was further noted that from the presentation received on the FSAI study that the foodstuff with the highest fluoride content (tea) varied very significantly (even with the same brand) . therefore fluoride content labelling might not be practicable or meaningful for such foods / beverages. This matter will be considered by the relevant sub-committee.

Members were advised if they had any questions regarding the General Data Protection Regulations to contact the Secretariat.

EB Minute 28/18: 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 (week 10th December) for the next Meeting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____