

Minutes of proceedings of the Plenary Meeting of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Wednesday, 26th June 2013.

Present: Dr Seamus O'Hickey (Chairman), Professor Denis O'Mullane, Professor John Clarkson, Dr Wayne Anderson, Mr Michael Kilcoyne, Mr Denis Lyons, Mr Stephen McDermott, Dr Joe Mullen, Mr Ray Parle, Bernadette McDonnell (representing Ms Teresa Cody).

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

Apologies: Mr Rowland Reece, Mr Luke Varley, Mr Gerry Flannery

EB Minute 09/13: Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were noted.

EB Minute 10/13: Minutes of the last meeting (6th March 2013)

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting on 6th March 2013 were agreed subject to amendments.

EB Minute 11/13: Matters Arising

It was noted that 'Toothpastes, Monographs in Oral Science' edited by Professor Cor van Loveren has been recently published and was launched at the 60th Congress of the European Organisation for Caries Research (ORCA), in Liverpool held on 3rd ó 6th July 2013 and is relevant to the Expert Body . It was further noted that the chapter 'After-Brush Rinsing Protocols, Frequency of Toothpaste Use: Fluoride and Other Active Ingredients' was written by Dr Carmel Parnell (co-opted member of the New and Emerging Issues Sub-Committee) and Professor Denis O'Mullane (member of the Expert Body).

EB Minute 12/13: Correspondence

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

In relation to correspondence from Dr Dympna Kavanagh, Chief Dental Officer to Dr Seamus O'Hickey, it was agreed it is a very important and welcome development that there is now a Chief Dental Officer linking with the Chief Medical Officer in the Department of Health.

It was noted that it is not the role of the Expert Body to promote water fluoridation and that it is the responsibility of the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive.

It was noted that the Dr Kavanagh has requested a work plan from the Expert Body for submission in September 2013.

It was agreed that the 27 questions which were answered by the Minister of State, Alex White T.D. are a great source for answering queries regarding water fluoridation.

It was suggested that a summary of the type of queries received be prepared. It was further suggested that a list of documents referred to by the Expert Body be included. It was agreed that the Executive Committee would make the decision regarding how to respond to queries. It was suggested that a policy on dealing with queries be drafted. It was noted that queries should not be taken by the Secretariat by telephone. It was agreed the Secretariat will advise people with queries to submit them in writing to the Expert Body.

It was agreed to put a statement on the Expert Body website advising of the Expert Body policy in response to queries.

EB Minute 13/13: Report of Sub-committees

The Quality Assurance Sub-committee reported the following:

- It was noted that the Expert Body is waiting to hear from the Department of Health regarding publication of the National Audit of Water Treatment Plants. It was noted that the current contract for the supply and delivery of Hydrofluosilicic Acid is due to expire in September 2014. It was further noted that a procurement process for the renewal of the contract will be put in place.
- It was noted that correspondence from Mr Stephen McDermott to Mr Gavin Maguire, Assistant National Director Emergency Planning, HSE, August (correspondence 2nd August 2012 refers), regarding Recommendation 2 (Technical Aspects of Water Fluoridation) of the Forum on Fluoridation Report, is under consideration by the National Steering Group on Fluoridation.
- It was noted that the review of the Code of Practice by the QA Sub-Committee is in progress.
- It was noted that there is widespread acceptance of the Code of Practice by Industry.
- It was noted that the Code of Practice will be referred to Irish Water.
- It was noted that Mr Ray Parle met with Irish Water as part of a HSE Group and that water fluoridation was discussed.
- It was noted that Service Level Agreements with the local authorities will continue up to 2017.
- Privatisation of water authorities in the UK was noted.

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

It was noted that Professor Denis O'Mullane has been elected as the new Chairman of the NEI Sub-Committee. Dr Joe Mullen was congratulated and thanked for his chairmanship of the NEI Sub-committee

- An update on the latest papers/documents reviewed by the NEI Sub-committee was presented to the plenary meeting. It was noted that approximately 20 papers had been reviewed since the last plenary meeting.

- It was noted that of these papers have relevance for all areas of medicine, not just fluoridation. It was further noted that this was a very interesting development and that it had possible implications for oral health.
- Details of conferences attended by the NEI Committee members were noted with significant papers or presentations being discussed.
- It was noted that the FDI will be issuing a policy statement on water fluoridation
- It was noted that water fluoridation is regarded as a local issue by the American Dental Association and that local dentists deal with the local authorities.
- It was noted that Expert Body members had made presentations to local authorities and to the Fine Gael Health Committee. It was further noted that from the meetings with the local authorities that general health is of concern rather than dental health.
- It was noted that there has been an increase in queries regarding the safety and efficacy of water fluoridation and that the Expert Body has responded to these queries
- It was noted that the FACCT Study (Fluoride And Caring for Children's Teeth) will be important in answering questions regarding oral health and dental fluorosis.
- It was noted that there is delay in issuing the Topical Fluoride Guidelines due to the preparation of the Protocol for the FACCT Study. It was noted that Dr Dymphna Kavanagh, Chief Dental Officer has requested the Expert Body to give thorough consideration to the FACCT study and the proposed TILDA study in the context of the requirements of the Health (Fluoridation of Water Supplies) Act 1960 and any outstanding recommendations of the Forum on Fluoridation report and to make any input or recommendations.
- It was agreed that invitations would be issued to the FACCT and TILDA Teams to make a presentation to the Expert Body regarding their proposals.
- It was noted that the National Fluoridation Information Service gives independent advice to the New Zealand Ministry of Health.
- The importance of scientific peer review evidence was noted
- It was noted that key expertise in public health medicine and fluorides is crucial.

EB Minute 14/13: Report of Executive Committee

The Report of the Executive Committee was noted.

It was noted that the future role of the Expert Body will fall within the remit of the new Chief Dental Officer, Dr Dymphna Kavanagh.

Issues regarding dealing with queries from members of the public were noted and discussed. It was noted that the Expert Body had requested the Press Ombudsman to close the file regarding Hot Press magazine.

It was noted that there is a misuse of information in schools regarding water fluoridation and that this is public health issue.

It was agreed to indicate the Expert Body's concern regarding this matter to the Minister for State, Alex White T.D.

It was noted that presentations were made by Expert Body members to local authorities including Dublin City Council, Mayo County Council and also to the Fine Gael Health Committee. It was further noted that a presentation was planned for the Regional Health Forum (South).

It was noted that Secretariat Costs are in line with the agreed Budget for 2013

EB Minute 15/13: Recommendations of the Forum on Fluoridation

It was noted that this would be included in the review of the work plan for Dr Kavanagh.

EB Minute 16/13: AOB

It was noted that the Food Safety Authority of Ireland informed the Expert Body of recent correspondence from Mr Declan Waugh regarding its Total Diet Study.

It was noted that the World Health Organisation (WHO) publication "Fluoride and Oral Health" should be published in the next six months.

EB Minute 17/13: Date of Next Meeting

The date for the next Plenary Meeting was agreed to be held 16th October 2013.

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 13:55pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____