

Minutes of proceedings of the Plenary Meeting of the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health held on Wednesday, 30th June 2016

Present: Dr Seamus O'Hickey (Chairman), Ms Bernadette McDonnell, Professor Denis O'Mullane, Professor John Clarkson, Mr Michael Kilcoyne

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

Apologies: Mr Ray Parle (Vice Chairman), Mr Stephen McDermott

EB Minute 10/16: Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting were noted.

EB Minute 11/16: Minutes of the last meeting (10th March 2016)

The minutes from the meeting of March 10th 2016 were agreed subject to minor amendments but would need to be signed by the Vice-Chair as the Chair could not attend the meeting of 10th March.

EB Minute 12/16: Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

EB Minute 13/16: Correspondence

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

It was noted that correspondence was received from the Food Unit in the Department of Health regarding the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Total Diet Study and Fluoride and that the Department will keep the Expert Body updated in this regard.

EB Minute 14/16: Report of Sub-committees

The Quality Assurance Sub-committee reported the following:

- It was noted that the Future Role of Expert Body is still under consideration by the Department of Health . the QA Sub-Committee is awaiting approval for its Work Plan.

- The Code of Practice on the Fluoridation of Drinking Water 2007 is in the final stages and will be going to print.
- The Protocol for the Independent Testing of Hydrofluosilicic Acid was also reviewed to take account of comments from the Public Analyst Laboratory and the National Steering Group on Fluoridation, HSE
- It was noted that the amended Protocol on the Independent Testing of Hydrofluosilicic Acid (to include the use of a tamper-evident container) would be circulated to Irish Water, The Public Analyst and to the supplier of Hydrofluosilicic Acid.

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 of Health. The papers do not impact or change the current practices on water fluoridation in the Republic of Ireland. The review included the following papers:
- **Risk Assessment of Fluoride Intake from Tea in the Republic of Ireland and its Implications for Public Health and Water Fluoridation', Waugh et al 2016.**

This paper does not impact on current practices or policies on water fluoridation in Ireland.

It was noted that the FSAI is currently conducting a thorough intake assessment on fluoride from the total diet of the Irish population, including tea.

- **'Measuring the short-term impact of fluoridation cessation on dental caries in Grade 2 children using tooth surface indices', McLauren et al 2016.**

This paper does not impact on current practices or policies on water fluoridation in Ireland. It was noted that further monitoring is required to determine the long-term effects of the cessation of water fluoridation.

- **‘The effects of ten years of defluoridation on urinary fluoride, defect dental fluorosis, and dental caries, in Jiangsu Province, PR China’, Xiang et al 2016.**

The methods used to address the aims are not adequate, the sample sizes are not sufficient to arrive at the conclusions made.

This paper does not impact on current practices or policies on water fluoridation in Ireland.

- **‘Sugar Consumption and Changes in Dental Caries from Childhood to Adolescence’, Peres et al 2016.**

It was noted that the higher the sugar consumption along the life course, the higher the dental caries increment. Even the low level of sugar consumption was related to dental caries, despite the use of fluorideq

- **‘Actions for the government to improve oral health’, Royal College of Surgeons (Eng), Faculty of Dental Surgery, 2015**

This paper was brought to attention of the Department of Health at the November Plenary Meeting of the Expert Body.

- **‘Caries-preventing effects of a suburban community water fluoridation program on permanent dentition after adjusting for the number of fissure-sealed teeth’, Jung et al 2016.**

This paper does not impact on current practices or policies on water fluoridation in Ireland including advice regarding fissure sealants.

- **‘On the Viability of Conspiratorial Beliefs’, Grimes 2016.**

It was noted that the grim reality is that there appears to be a cohort so ideologically invested in a belief that for whom no reasoning will shift, their convictions impervious to the intrusions of realityq

- **‘It’s not just about baby teeth: Preventing Early Childhood Caries’, University of Calgary, SPP Briefing Paper, April 2016.**

It was agreed that this paper be brought to the attention of the Academic Reference Group, Oral Health Academic Research Group.

- **‘A changing sector: where is science communication now?’ British Science Association 2016.**

It was noted that this paper might be useful to inform the future role of the Expert Body.

- **‘Fluoride and Oral Health’, O’Mullane et al 2016**

It was noted that Dr Seamus O’Hickey had reviewed the paper ‘Fluoride and Oral Health’ O’Mullane et al 2016 the review was circulated to the NEI Members.

This paper is available on open access www.cdjournal.org/download.php?op=view_article&article_id=704

- **‘Peer review in 2015, A global view’. A white paper from Taylor & Francis, 2015.**

- It was acknowledged that interesting developments are taking place in the peer review process.

- It was noted that the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) clarified that pre-approval was not required for cosmetics in Europe and therefore not for toothpaste . including Aloe Vera toothpaste.

- The HPRA stated that claims which are not substantiated and justified are not permitted on cosmetic products

- Packaging of Aloe Vera toothpaste was reviewed by the NEI Sub-Committee.

- It was agreed that the claim ‘You can be sure your child is getting all the benefits of toothpaste+ - when fluoride is not present is misleading.

- It was agreed to request the HPRA to investigate the claims made regarding the Aloe Vera toothpaste.

- It was noted that the Expert Body FAQ is under review by the NEI Subcommittee.
- It was noted that the conference of the European Association of Public Dental Health will take place end of September. It was proposed that Dr Carmel Parnell and Ms Etain Kett represent the Expert Body.

EB Minute 15/16: Report of Executive Committee

The Report of the Executive Committee was noted.

Secretariat Costs were for January . April 2016 were reviewed. It was noted that these costs were within budget.

EB Minute 16/16: Future Role of Expert Body

The Department of Health has prepared a submission for the Minister of Health.

EB Minute 17/16: AOB

It was noted that the Internal Audit Unit is carrying out an audit on Expert Body funding for the year 2014-2015.

It was noted that an article was published by the Australian Spinal Research Foundation regarding water fluoridation.

It was noted that the overuse of antibiotics, tackling issues related to periodontal disease and genomics will be discussed at the forthcoming FDI Annual World Dental Congress in September in Poznanq

It was noted that according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) . the 2014 Fluoridation Census, there has been an increase of 3.5 million people receiving optimally fluoridated water since the 2012 census.

It was noted that Professor Xiaojuan Zeng, a leading dental public health expert from China was invited to Ireland by Dr Ger Gavin, Chief Dental Officer, Decare to discuss how aspects of oral health care have developed in Ireland and to look for possible synergies between Chinese and Irish systems. It was noted that Ms Deirdre Martin, Oral Health Promoter, HSE brought the Mighty Mouth Programme (developed by the Dental Health Foundation) to Dr Zeng's attention regarding oral health education promotion for school children in Ireland.



It was noted that University College Cork received a KEDS Supplemental Award (Knowledge exchange and dissemination) from the Health Research Board in 2015 for Evidence-based oral healthcare for older adultsq

EB Minute 18/16: Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 12:40pm. The date for the next meeting was suggested as Thursday 27th October 2016.

Signed: _____

Date: _____