

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

12th MEETING OF THE SUBGROUP ON MATERNAL AND CHILD NUTRITION

11 September 2009, Department of Health, Room LG21,
Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG

DRAFT MINUTES

Attendees:

Dr Anthony Williams (Chair)
Professor Alan Jackson
Dr Ann Prentice
Dr Robert Fraser
Dr Stella Walsh
Professor Tim Key

Secretariat:

Dr Sheela Reddy (DH)
Rachel Coomber (DH)
Rachel Elsom (FSA)

Observers:

Susan Sky (Welsh Assembly)

Chair's Introduction

1. The Chair welcomed Members to the twelfth meeting of the Subgroup on Maternal and Child Nutrition. Apologies were received from Professor Annie Anderson, Professor Peter Aggett and also from observers Dr Ruth Campbell (Scottish Government) and Dr Naresh Chada (Northern Ireland).
2. The Chair invited Members to declare or update any conflicts of interest. None was declared.
3. The Chair drew attention to a number of additional tabled papers for the meeting that not been previously circulated. These included comments from Professor Annie Anderson on various agenda items sent by email, and a copy of the revised Start4Life behaviours which would be covered under AOB.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – Minutes of last meeting

4. Members were invited to comment on the minutes of the meeting on 29 January 2009 (SMCN/09/min01). The following amendments were agreed:
 - Paragraph 17 – amend sentence to “.....to promote breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding”
 - Paragraph 20 – delete sentence “In this way leveraging....“
 - Paragraph 29 – delete last sentence “Examples given ...”
5. Pending the above corrections, the minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

Matters arising

6. Dr Sheela Reddy reported the progress on matters arising from the previous meeting. The following points were raised:

SMCN/08/06

7. Members were informed that the Baker *et al* 2009 paper has been tabled for information. Members asked if there were any other related publications to this work and it was clarified that no further papers relevant to this work had yet been published.
8. The Secretariat agreed to contact the research project coordinator to see if there were any other papers of importance to this topic being published, noting that obesity and breastfeeding are areas of particular interest.

ACTION: Secretariat to contact the Principal Researcher

SMCN/08/AOB

9. Members were informed that the future work plan would be addressed on completion of the early nutrition report, and therefore Terms of Reference for neither pending items had been drawn up. However, it was agreed that a paper outlining the Subgroup's proposal to undertake a review of the evidence around complementary feeding would be presented to the SACN Main Committee at their Horizon Scanning meeting in October 09.

ACTION: Dr Tony Williams to draft paper to present at the Horizon Scanning meeting in October 09

10. The Chair explained that the most recent review of complementary feeding is the 1991 COMA report 'Weaning and the weaning diet' (report no. 45). There have been a number of changes to Government advice on infant feeding since this review, particularly in the context of the WHO review of infant and young child feeding in 2005. It was noted that by the time this work is commissioned and the data is collected, preliminary results from the new joint DH/FSA Diet and Nutrition Survey of Infants and Young Children (DNSIYC) and the Infant Feeding Survey 2010 should also be available which could inform the context of the review.
11. It was agreed that the Subgroup would aim to begin this work early in 2010 with a plan to report in 2013. Co-opting external members with relevant expertise on to the Subgroup was also recommended.

SMCN/09/02

12. Members were updated on discussions with the infant formula industry about Good Night milk drinks following publication of SACN's statement on the suitability of these for children over 6 months. It was confirmed that the Department of Health and Food Standards Agency had been in discussion with industry and that the companies had responded to the Committee's concerns. It was requested that the Secretariat circulate details of the specific outcomes to Members at the next meeting.

ACTION: Secretariat to provide members with further information on Good Night milk drinks

SMCN/09/03

13. At the last meeting Members had asked for an update on the nutrition training of the workforce. Dr Sheela Reddy informed Members that there have been developments in training the workforce. The Department of Health had provided funding to the Association for Nutrition (AfN) to undertake some work to establish mechanisms through which all members of the health and social care workforce are enabled to become more competent in nutrition.
14. Members had asked for an update about the logistical problems with regard to the withdrawal of Healthy Start women's vitamins. It was confirmed that this had been resolved after extensive discussions with industry.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – The influence of maternal, fetal and child nutrition on the development of disease in later life (SMCN/09/04 and SMCN/09/05)

15. The Chair reminded Members that a draft of the report had been presented to the main SACN Committee in June 2009, and Members had been content with the overall revised structure of the report. Following the main SACN meeting, the Secretariat met the Chair to discuss the Committee's comments and had revised the report incorporating the suggested changes (paper SMCN/09/04). The Chair had also largely edited the report and drafted some conclusions, circulated for this meeting as a separate paper for discussion (SMCN/09/05). The Chair noted that there was still a substantial amount of editorial refinement required, but that the drafting group would meet again prior to public consultation.
16. The Chair noted that the intention was to circulate a final draft, with draft conclusions, to the main SACN Committee again on 1st October 09. Following this, the Secretariat would meet with the drafting group and prepare the report for a consultation after November 2009.
17. Members were invited to discuss and comment on the revised draft in the light of comments from the main SACN Committee (listed in a table). Any further drafting

changes were noted. Comments from Professor Annie Anderson, which had been sent by email and tabled for information were also considered.

18. Members then considered draft conclusions, which had been drawn up by the Chair. Suggested editorial and structural changes were noted.
19. It was agreed that the Secretariat would make necessary amendments to the report for a draft to be presented at the October SACN meeting. It was also agreed that the report should go out for a scientific consultation along with conclusions, as is the case for other SACN consultations. The recommendations, which should include recommendations for policy and for further research, will be drawn up following consultation. Members suggested it would also be useful for SACN to have a stated policy for future consultations.

ACTION: 1) Secretariat to make revisions and present the report to the main SACN Committee in October and 2) Secretariat to consider drawing up a document which outlines the nature of the SACN's consultations

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Assessment of a novel ingredient for infant formula (SMCN/09/06)

20. The Chair introduced the paper and provided a background to the request that had come to the Committee from the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The Chair noted that the information presented and discussed for the item was strictly confidential and should not be circulated any more widely.
21. The Chair informed Members that the Secretariat had sought initial comments from Professor Peter Aggett, and drew attention to his comments that had been circulated for information.
22. Members were invited to discuss and comment on the information provided, focusing particularly on the questions outlined in the paper. Members thanked the Food Standards Agency for their very helpful cover paper and accompanying information.

23. After discussion, Members agreed that the Subgroup was not in a position to draw firm conclusions from the information provided by the company. Several questions became apparent during the discussion. The Secretariat noted the Subgroup's concerns and agreed to feed this back to FSA.

ACTION: Secretariat to feed discussion back to the FSA and request clarification on points of uncertainty that had been highlighted in the discussion

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Updates on Activities related to Maternal and Child Nutrition (SMCN/09/07)

FSA Update

24. Rachel Elsom provided an update on current FSA activities related to maternal and child nutrition, highlighting the following:

- Plans for a new joint DH/FSA Diet and Nutrition Survey of Infants and Young Children (DNSIYC) are underway and the contract has been agreed.
- The FSA and DH have recently updated their advice on peanut consumption during early life and allergy risk

DH Update

25. Dr Sheela Reddy provided an update on current DH activities related to maternal and child nutrition, highlighting the following:

- Routine feedback to parents of data collected for the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) appears to have been well received. There will be an evaluation of this in September 2009. Full evaluation of NCMP will be undertaken in 2010/11
- The Joint SACN/RCPCH Group that originally considered the applicability of the new WHO Growth Standards for UK children is to consider options for calculating child obesity prevalence in England, and the applicability of newly published

WHO head circumference data for UK children. The Group will meet on 29th September 2009.

- The number of Healthy Start recipients is increasing in the current climate
- The new UK90-WHO growth charts were launched successfully in May 2009. RCPCH have been holding training sessions for health professionals and users of the charts

26. Members asked about progress towards the evaluation of Healthy Start. Dr Sheela Reddy explained that a call for proposals will be made imminently and brought to Member's attention.

ACTION: Secretariat to circulate the advert calling for proposals to undertake an evaluation of Healthy Start

Welsh Assembly Update

27. Susan Sky provided an update on current activities in Wales related to maternal and child nutrition. The following points were highlighted:

- There is a new National Programme to support breastfeeding in Wales to ensure more consistent training across the country
- Breastfeeding Data Collection Pilot Scheme is still ongoing – this was delayed because of updating the PCHR books

28. Members asked whether there were any entry requirements for the Open College Network. It was clarified that this was for breastfeeding mothers who would like to train as peer supporters. Susan Sky noted that this was very popular in Wales and since there had been a number of different courses which were inconsistent with one another, it was decided to draw up a syllabus that was fairly general.

29. Dr Sheela Reddy asked the age of children included in the Healthy Weight Data Collection Feasibility Study. This information will be provided at the next meeting.

ACTION: Wales to feedback further information about the Healthy Weight Data Collection Feasibility Study, particularly with regard to age of the children

AOB

Start4Life Behaviours

30. The Chair welcomed Jenny Haselden and Michael Wilton from the Start4Life team. Jenny Haselden thanked Members for their comments on the preliminary set of behaviours back in January and explained that these comments had formed the basis of the revisions. It was explained that the behaviours had been through a number of iterations with various stakeholders and policy teams but had remained broadly similar.
31. It was noted that some qualitative research had also been undertaken to test the behaviours with the target audience. Jenny Haselden explained that two stakeholder meetings had recently been held to involve interested stakeholders, including those with particular expertise from the academic community on these topics. Individual SACN members (who had volunteered to be involved following the last meeting) had also been given the opportunity to comment.
32. Jenny Haselden briefly talked through the behaviours and then the Chair invited Members to comment. A few comments were noted but Members were invited to send additional comments back to the Secretariat following the meeting. The Secretariat agreed to forward these to Members not present at the meeting.

ACTION: Secretariat to circulate behaviours to Members not present at the meeting

Next meeting

33. The next Subgroup meeting will be held on 13th January 2010.