



Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

28th MEETING

1st October 2009, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH

Final Minutes

Chairman	Professor Alan Jackson
Members	Professor Peter Aggett Professor Annie Anderson Mrs Christine Gratus Dr Paul Haggarty Professor Tim Key Professor Peter Kopelman Professor Ian Macdonald Dr David Mela Dr Ann Prentice Dr Anita Thomas Dr Stella Walsh Dr Tony Williams
Government Observers and other attendees	Dr Alison Tedstone (FSA Observer) Mr Paul Nunn (FSA) (Agenda item 2 only) Mr Stephen Airey (FSA) (Agenda item 4 only) Lord Jeff Rooker (FSA)
Secretariat	Dr Elaine Stone (FSA) Dr Sheela Reddy (DH) Ms Mamta Singh (FSA) Mrs Rachel Marklew (DH) Mr Michael Griffin (FSA) Mrs Helen Riley (FSA)

Morning Session

Closed Session

1. The Chair welcomed Members to the 28th SACN meeting and explained that the business that morning would be held in closed session. He then introduced Lord Rooker, the new FSA Chair, who was attending the first hour of the meeting.

Agenda item 1 – Draft Early Nutrition report (SACN/09/27)

2. The Chair introduced agenda item number 1, the Subgroup on Maternal and Child Nutrition's report on early life nutrition and later health. Members were informed that the draft had been revised following the June 2009 SACN meeting and that the Committee's comments had been incorporated. The Chair noted that comments had been tabulated at the end of the report for information, and this included a list of actions taken to address each of the comments. The Chair asked if Members were happy with the revisions and that they adequately reflected comments made at the last meeting - Members were content with the changes made.
3. The Chair then asked Members to focus their discussion on the draft conclusions, which had been drafted by the Chair of the Subgroup. Dr Tony Williams took Members through the draft conclusions paragraph by paragraph and suggested amendments were noted. Members called for the use of plain English.
4. It was agreed that the comments would be captured in another revision and the draft report would be put out for scientific consultation in late November 2009. It was noted that the Committee would be consulting on the draft report and conclusions, but that recommendations would be drawn up following the consultation period.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 2 – Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) and hard water paper (SACN/09/28)

5. Paul Nunn (Labelling Standards and Allergy Division, FSA) was in attendance and provided Members with background information regarding EC legislation for bottled water. He informed Members that previous regulations from 1980 prescribed a minimum hardness of water sold in bottles which was removed at EU level after being revised in 1998. However, this requirement in relation to calcium content was retained in the UK legislation, based on a COMA report in 1994 indicating that hard water may decrease risk of CVD.

6. Mamta Singh was in attendance and provided Members with an overview of the epidemiological evidence on water hardness, in relation to calcium and magnesium, and CVD risk.
7. The Agency sought the Committee's advice on whether there is sufficient scientific evidence to support the retention of a statutory minimum hardness for bottled water to benefit public health. And if so, how this should be depicted in the regulations (minimum calcium and/or magnesium and/or total hardness level), and what would be the most appropriate minimum level(s). Also, if retained, is it acceptable that producers meet this requirement by using remineralisation of softened/desalinated waters.
8. Paul Nunn clarified that the regulation would only apply to bottled water for practical reasons and that tap water lies outside the Agency's remit.
9. The Committee considered that there was insufficient evidence to show a benefit of hard water for cardiovascular health, due to limitations of studies and confounders.
10. Some members expressed concern that vulnerable groups may be compromised by the removal of this statutory requirement. For example, young women, where a fifth of young women have magnesium intakes below the LRNI. It was noted that data on bottled water consumption is not collected as part of the NDNS. The Committee recognised this as a potential issue, however, agreed that bottled water is unlikely to make a significant contribution to the dietary intakes of calcium and magnesium to be of great significance to public health.
11. The Committee concluded that there was insufficient scientific evidence to support the retention of the statutory minimum hardness for bottled water, in relation to both calcium and magnesium.

Open Session

12. The Chair welcomed Members, Observers and the Secretariat to the open session of the 28th SACN meeting. Members were informed that Dr Fiona Bissett had stepped down as Scottish observer and that the Secretariat were in the process of finding a replacement.
13. Apologies were received from Dr Naresh Chada (Northern Irish observer) and Mrs Maureen Howell (Welsh observer).
14. The Chair informed Members that shortly after the meeting in June when Members were told of Professor Sheila Bingham's retirement from SACN, she passed away. The Chair once again reminded Members of the valuable contribution Professor Bingham made to both COMA and SACN. The Committee observed a moments silence and offered their condolences to her family.

Agenda Item 3 – Minutes of SACN meeting on 10 June 2009 (SACN/09/min/03)

15. Members were invited to comment on the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2009 (SACN/09/min/03). After queries regarding the suggested horizon scanning items not being on the meeting agenda for 2 October, the Chair explained that this was because papers were not submitted by Members and therefore the subject would not be discussed.
16. Minor amendments were made to paragraph 33: DH (SACN/09/18). The remainder of the minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting on 10 June 2009.

Matters Arising Action Check List (SACN/09/13)*SACN/09/01 – Iron Report*

17. Members were informed that the draft Iron and Health report went out for a 14-week consultation which closed on 23 September 2009. Thirteen responses were received. The report will be amended to take responses into consideration and will be discussed by the Iron Working Group on 11 November 2009.

Action: Secretariat

SACN/09/03 – Energy Report

18. The Secretariat will reconsider the timeline for the consultation on the draft Energy Requirements report and circulate the revised report to Members before the consultation, which is expected no earlier than 5 November 2009. Members requested a table to identify how their comments are addressed in the report.

Action: Secretariat

SACN/09/07 – Brief Committee on saturated fat campaign

19. It was noted that Stephen Airey of the Agency's Saturated Fat and Energy Intake Programme team would update the Committee on the saturated fat campaign at agenda item 4.

SACN/09/07 – Update on food security and sustainability

20. The Secretariat had agreed to arrange for the Committee to receive an update on sustainability at a future meeting. It was noted that sustainability would be discussed at the Horizon Scanning meeting on 2 October 2009.

SACN/09/15 – *Draft report to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) on folic acid and cancer risk*

21. The Committee was updated on the progress of this report, which has been redrafted and circulated to Members for comment. Members were informed that the Agency plan to send the report to the CMO around 12 October 2009. Members will receive prior warning of the report being made public.

AOB – *Selenium report*

22. Members were informed that due to new evidence, the Selenium report will need to be redrafted and the Secretariat plan to commission this work externally. Members noted that new evidence on this subject is always being published, so there is a need to reflect on the process, timing and end points for the Committee's work.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 4 – Saturated Fat Campaign update

23. Stephen Airey from the Agency's Saturated Fat and Energy Intake Programme was in attendance to update the Committee on the progress of the Agency's saturated fat campaign.

24. Members were updated on both the consumer campaign and the teams work to encourage manufacturers to reformulate food to reduce saturated fat levels. It was said that the extensive advertising campaign reached wide audiences and received positive reviews nine times out of ten. Stephen Airey mentioned plans to make smaller portion sizes, which are already being manufactured, more readily available to consumers.

25. Members were informed that the next stage of the campaign will focus on savoury snacks, meat products and dairy products. It was mentioned that there is work to encourage consumers to switch from semi skimmed milk to the new 1% milk, which has no difference in taste but has approximately half the fat. Members

mentioned that the Agency should bear in mind that the fat taken from milk may be used in the manufacture of other foods and therefore returned to the food chain, though it was noted that much was exported (and therefore entered the food chain in other countries) or was used in pet food products. One participant said that the ideal solution would be to turn the removed fat into bio fuels but this was not economical at this time. It was also noted that total saturated fat intake is monitored, not just saturated fat intake from dairy products.

26. Stephen Airey assured the Committee that the campaign is directed at adults after it was mentioned that the Department of Health give advice that children under two years old should consume full-fat milk and we would not want contradicting messages.

Agenda item 5 – Working Group updates

Sub Group on Maternal and Child Nutrition (SMCN)

27. Dr Tony Williams updated Members on the main activities of SMCN. Members were informed that the Subgroup held their last meeting on 11 September 2009 where the main item was the early nutrition report, discussed at agenda item 1.

Energy Working Group

28. Professor Alan Jackson reminded the Committee that the draft Energy Requirements report will be released for consultation in November 2009 and responses received will be discussed by the Working Group thereafter.

Carbohydrate Working Group

29. The Carbohydrate Working Group last met on 21 September 2009 and Professor Ian Macdonald updated Members on progress. Since the last meeting the Working Group has made progress on the colorectal health review for which Dr Peter Sanderson had submitted a paper on studies he had identified relating to carbohydrates and colorectal cancer.
30. Professor Macdonald informed the Committee that they are working with Leeds University on the protocol for the Cardiometabolic health systematic review, and that a draft protocol has been submitted by the University.
31. The Carbohydrates Working Group discussed the recent draft opinion on DRV's for carbohydrates and dietary fibre published by EFSA and agreed to feedback comments as part of its consultation. All Members were invited to contribute to this response and were asked to send any comments to Dr Elaine Stone by 9 October 2009.
32. The Working Group also agreed to begin work on their dental health terms of reference once a dental expert has been appointed to the Committee. It is expected that the new Committee member will join the Carbohydrate Working Group.

Action: Members / Secretariat

Iron Working Group

33. Professor Peter Aggett updated the Committee on the scientific consultation for the draft report on Iron and Health, which closed on 23 September 2009. Thirteen comments were received and the Secretariat will redraft the report to address these comments before they are discussed the next Working Group meeting on 11 November 2009.

Action: Secretariat

Approaches to the Nutritional Assessment of novel Foods (ANANF) Subgroup

34. Professor Alan Jackson updated the Committee on the ANANF subgroup, explaining that there has been no progress on the issue since the last meeting and that the SACN Secretariat will talk to ACNFP Secretariat on the matter.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 6 – Government updates on nutrition related activities

FSA (SACN/09/17)

35. Dr Alison Tedstone gave an update of FSA activities highlighting in particular the following points:

- *Salt – Revised salt reduction and the salt awareness campaign* - the Agency's preparations are underway for the launch of the fourth phase of the public awareness campaign which will begin on 5 October 2009 and will highlight the positive changes consumers can make to reduce their salt intake.
- *Catering (Nutrition Labelling)* – the Agency has been working with catering companies to provide consumers with calorie labelling on menus.
- *Sustainability review of fish consumption advice* – revised advice on fish consumption was published on the 'Eatwell' website on 17 September 2009. The current advice has been supplemented with information to enable informed, sustainable choices and includes links to advice and guidance from other bodies.

DH (SACN/09/18)

36. Dr Sheela Reddy gave an update of DH activities highlighting in particular the following points:

- *Joint SACN/RCPCH meeting*– A joint meeting of SACN and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health was held on Tuesday 29 September 2009 to discuss options for calculating child obesity prevalence in England, and also the applicability of new WHO head circumference centiles for children in the UK. The Committee would be kept informed of the Group's progress.

- *Healthy Child Programme* – The Healthy Child Programme is being put in place to strengthen delivery of health based programmes in pregnancy and the first five years of life, prioritising obesity prevention and physical activity through positive parenting during pregnancy and early life.
- *Promoting healthier options in convenient stores* – The Department of Health is attempting to persuade retailers to offer fruit and vegetable in local stores to enable those in deprived areas to benefit from access to fresh fruit and vegetables. This is in order to improve the health of their customers, but also help increase their own profits.
- *Change4life* – It was reported that more people were signing up to the Change4Life programme and a detailed report will be given at the next meeting following an evaluation of the programme in late 2009

Devolved Health Departments (SACN/09/19)

Northern Ireland

37. Dr Naresh Chada was not in attendance to give an update on the activities in Northern Ireland. A written update was made available.

Wales

38. Mrs Maureen Howell was not in attendance to give an update on the activities in Wales. A written update was made available.

Scotland

39. No Scottish observer was in attendance to give an update on the activities in Scotland. A written update was made available.

EFSA (SACN/09/20)

40. No update was received.

AOB**SACN response to vitamin D petition**

41. A copy of SACN's response to the Scottish Parliament's Public Petition (PE1259) on vitamin D, together with the original letter from the Scottish Parliament asking for SACN's comment, were tabled at the meeting for information. Members were informed that the response had been based on the Committee's current position, as outlined in their 2007 position statement *Update on Vitamin D*. It was clarified that the Committee would be revisiting vitamin D once further data become available, and it is likely that a Working/Subgroup would be set up for this purpose.

Next meeting

42. The next meeting will be held on 24 February 2010 at Aviation House.

Meeting close