



Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

30th MEETING

24th February 2010, 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 Timothy Key Professor Peter Kopelman Dr Susan Lanham-New Dr Julie Lovegrove Professor Ian Macdonald Professor Harry McArdle Dr David Mela Dr Ann Prentice Professor Hilary Powers Professor Angus Walls Dr Stella Walsh Dr Tony Williams
Secretariat	Dr Elaine Stone (FSA) Dr Sheela Reddy (DH) Michael Griffin (FSA) Rachel Marklew (DH) Helen Riley (FSA) Mamta Singh (FSA)
Government observers and other attendees	Dr Alison Tedstone (FSA) Dr Naresh Chada (Northern Ireland) Maureen Howell (Wales) Anna Taylor (Dept for International Development) Dr Clair Baynton (FSA) Gillian Swan (FSA) Rachel Stratton (FSA) Dr Fiona Comrie (FSA Scotland) Shaun Wheelan (FSA) Beverley Cook (FSA) Xanthi Maragkoudaki (DH)
External observers	Dr Eleni Maunder and 6 students (Bournemouth University)

Melaine Ruffell (Food and Drink Federation)
Rufus Greenbaum (Technology Consultant)
Rod Addie (Food Manufacture magazine)

Morning Session

Open Session

1. The Chair welcomed Members, observers and the Secretariat to the 30th SACN meeting, giving special mention to Dr Ann Prentice the SACN Chair elect and five of the six new Committee Members.
2. The five new members present were Dr Susan Lanham-New, Dr Julie Lovegrove, Professor Harry McArdle, Professor Hilary Powers and Professor Angus Walls. An apology was accepted from Professor Ian Young, the sixth new member on the Committee and from Dr Anita Thomas.
3. The Chair welcomed Dr Clair Baynton, the new Head of the Nutrition Division at the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The Chair informed members that Rachel Stratton an FSA member of staff would be observing the meeting as part of her DrPH project on organisational and policy analysis.
4. The Chair noted that Dr Sian Robinson and Dr Ken Ong have been appointed to the Subgroup on Maternal and Child Nutrition (SMCN).
5. Members made no new declarations of interest.
6. The Chair tabled a revised agenda for the meeting, which included the update from the Department of International Development (DFID) in closed session given the restricted status of the information to be discussed.

Agenda Item 1 – Minutes of SACN meeting on 1 October 2009 (SACN/09/min/04)

7. Members were invited to comment on the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2009 (SACN/09/min/04).
8. The minutes were agreed with minor amendments as an acceptable record of the meeting.

Action: Secretariat

Minutes of SACN Horizon Scanning meeting on 2 October 2009 (SACN/09/min/05)

9. Members were invited to comment on the minutes of the Horizon Scanning meeting held on 2 October 2009 (SACN/09/min/05).
10. Members requested that the discussion on an alternative title for the item '*Increasing artificiality and manipulation of the human diet*' be captured in the minutes. The title suggested was '*Nutritional implications of new food technologies and processes*'. Other minor changes were agreed in relation to this agenda item.
11. The remainder of the minutes were agreed as an acceptable record of the meeting.

Action: Secretariat

Matters Arising Action Check List (SACN/10/01)*SACN/09/01 – Iron and Health Report*

12. Members were informed that the Iron Working Group met in November 2009 and the report has been amended to take consultation responses into consideration. The report was discussed under agenda item 2 of this meeting.

SACN/09/03 – Energy Requirements Report

13. Members were informed that the scientific consultation on the draft report ended on 11 February 2010 and the Working Group will meet on 12 April 2010 to discuss the consultation responses and amend the report.

Action: Energy Working Group

SACN/09/15 – Report to the Chief Medical Officer on folic acid and colorectal cancer risk

14. Members were reminded that the report had been sent to the Chief Medical Officer in October 2009, and that the full report will be published on the SACN website once the results from the meta-analysis presented in the report are published. Following queries regarding the timeline for publication of these results, the Secretariat informed the Committee that they had not received a definite publication date.

15. It was noted that Health Ministers are yet to make a decision on whether mandatory folic acid fortification should be introduced in the UK, and that the timing for any decision is unknown.

SACN/09/27 – Early Life Nutrition and Later Health Report

16. It was noted that the draft report is currently out for a 12-week scientific consultation, which ends on 30 April 2010. The SMCN will meet in May to discuss the responses and amend the report.

Action: SMCN

AOB – Selenium Report

17. Members were informed that the Secretariat will carry out further work on the Selenium report once the Iron and Health report has been published.

Action: Secretariat

AOB – ANANF report

18. The SACN Secretariat had met with ACNFP Secretariat to progress this work.

Action: Secretariat

SACN/HS/09/05 – Sustainability – Defra observer on SACN

19. The Chair announced that Bronwen Jones, Head of Sustainability has agreed to be the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) observer on SACN.

SACN/HS/09/07 – European Food Safety Authority

20. Dr Alison Tedstone informed the Committee of the various interactions between the FSA and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). She also reported that members of the SACN Secretariat recently met with the EFSA Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies Panel Secretariat, and will do so regularly in the future to build a greater working relationship. It was noted that an update on EFSA's work activities is provided at agenda item 7.

Agenda item 2 – Iron and Health report (SACN/10/02)

21. The Chair thanked Professor Peter Aggett, Chair of the Iron Working Group, and the Secretariat for their work on drafting the report. The Chair reminded Members that, since substantial comments had already been made by them at a previous meeting, he did not propose discussing each section of the report but intended to focus on the overall summary and conclusions and on the recommendations.

22. Professor Peter Aggett introduced the report. He informed Members that the report had been amended to take account of comments made by them at the SACN meeting in February 2009, which included making it clearer why the issue of iron and health was considered and the main challenges and uncertainties in the

evidence. The draft report had then been made available for public comment during a 3-month consultation period (June–September 2009) and fifteen responses had been received. The draft report had also been considered by the Committee on Carcinogenicity and Committee on Toxicity who had also submitted responses to the consultation. Members were informed of the main changes to the draft report following the consultation, which included: clarification on why red meat was being considered in relation to colorectal cancer; more detailed consideration of fortification iron; updating of the section considering iron supplementation of iron replete children; and emphasising the difficulties and uncertainties underlying a risk assessment of iron.

23. Dr Alison Tedstone presented new data on iron/meat intakes and iron status from year 1 of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) rolling programme (2008/9) which had recently been published (except for the blood data). Members were informed that data from new NDNS had not been used to reassess the adequacy of iron intakes and iron status of the UK population in the report because sample sizes for intake data from the first year of the rolling programme were too small for subgroup analysis and sample sizes for blood analysis were even smaller and probably not representative. Also, the dietary methodology had changed from that used in previous NDNS surveys (7 days weighed records). In the NDNS rolling programme, diet was assessed using a 4-day estimated diary on consecutive days (including both weekend days). Since people tend to eat more meat at the weekend, estimates of meat intake may appear to be higher than they actually are. Members were informed that the sampling protocol for the next year had been changed to include fewer weekend days so the data would even out in the future.

24. Members were invited to make general comments on the report. Some minor changes were suggested, including clarification of: why intakes of zinc and vitamin D, which were included in the modelling exercise, are of concern; why effects of meat reduction on children was not considered; the concept of Mendelian randomisation in the genetic evidence; and to include details of which studies included in meta-analyses were adequately powered.

25. Members were then invited to comment on the summary and conclusions and the recommendations.
26. *Summary and conclusions:* Some minor amendments were agreed. The general consensus was that the information and important points included in the report were appropriately and adequately captured in the summary and conclusions. It was agreed to include a paragraph on dietary data from the new NDNS rolling programme (2008/9) but to clearly state the caveats and insecurities. However, it was agreed not to include the blood data.
27. *Recommendations:* It was agreed to clarify that the recommendation regarding red and processed meat consumption related only to adults and to specify that '*reducing intakes of red and processed meat to 80 g/d*' refers to high consumers. It was also noted that this recommendation refers to the '*current*' average intake of red and processed meat of 70 g/d, however this figure was the average intake in 2000/1 and unadjusted data from the new NDNS indicate that average intakes of red and processed meat may have increased. It was agreed that the Secretariat would explore calculation of a day weighted average intake from the new NDNS data to obtain more appropriate current estimates of red and processed meat intake. It was also agreed that if 2000/1 NDNS data is used then the word '*current*' should be removed from this recommendation.
28. *Research recommendations:* Some minor amendments in wording were agreed. It was agreed to expand the research recommendation regarding vulnerable groups to include improved understanding of the factors underlying differences in risk of iron deficiency anaemia between women from low income groups and those in the general population.

29. It was agreed that after the report had been redrafted to capture the points that had been discussed it would be circulated to Members for their agreement via correspondence. Members were informed that the intended date for publication of the finalised report was April/May, in time for the FSA Board meeting in May 2010.

Action: Secretariat

Closed session

Agenda item 5 – Update from the Department for International Development

30. Anna Taylor from the Department for International Development (DFID) briefed the Committee on the Department's Nutrition Strategy, which will be launched on 10 March 2010. She explained that the Strategy will focus on undernutrition in developing countries. To deliver the Strategy, DFID will work alongside its 22 partner countries and adopt a multi-sectoral response that involves both direct and indirect health interventions.

31. Members were supportive of the Strategy and its aim to highlight and address the issue of undernutrition. Ms Taylor invited Members to attend the launch of the strategy. It was agreed that the Strategy's executive summary should be circulated to Members. The Chair encouraged members to think of ways the Committee could contribute to DFID's work.

Action: Secretariat

Open session

Agenda item 3 – Committee openness (SACN/10/10)

32. The Chair introduced the item on Committee openness, explaining that it was last discussed three years ago and given the addition of several new Members that it was an opportune time for the Committee to review its position on this issue. The Chair specifically asked Members to consider whether horizon scanning meetings and discussions on post-consultation reports should be held in open session.
33. Members were supportive of making Committee deliberations as open as possible. Some members considered that holding all deliberations in open session might help public understanding about the uncertainties around evidence on nutrition issues. Others were not assured that the information and uncertainties would be appropriately respected by the media and other groups, particularly during initial deliberations by the Committee or its working groups.
34. Members agreed that the status quo should be maintained for main meetings. That is, main meetings are held in open session, with items that are pre-consultation or include confidential or unpublished data discussed in closed session. In addition, Members agreed that post-consultation reports, generally, should be finalised and agreed by the Committee in open session in the future.
35. Members generally agreed that the discussions of Working Groups should remain in closed session. While some Members considered that it may be beneficial for external observers to attend, others thought that discussions could be constrained and that individual member's opinions may be captured and used inappropriately. It was also noted that these groups often consider confidential or pre-publication data, which would not be appropriate to consider in public.
36. Overall, Members considered that horizon scanning meetings should continue to be held in closed session. It was noted that these are creative discussions between Members on possible issues for SACN to consider, and an open meeting may not allow this to occur freely and fully. Also, some Members expressed concern that

individual members could be targeted if the topic is of interest to a particular group and there are opposing views. The Chair asked Members to reflect further on this issue and suggested that it is discussed again at the next Horizon Scanning meeting.

Action: Secretariat

37. The Chair requested that at main meetings where an issue is to be discussed in closed session that it be scheduled at the end of the meeting, for the benefit of external observers.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 4 – NDNS: First year results (SACN/10/03)

38. Mrs Gillian Swan from the FSA's Diet and Nutrition Surveys Branch presented the preliminary findings from the recently published year 1 of the NDNS rolling programme for intake of macronutrients and micronutrients, and consumption of fruit and vegetables and oily fish, focusing on comparisons with dietary recommendations and with previous surveys. Work had been carried out to disaggregate data on composite dishes to provide better estimates of fruit and vegetables and meat and fish consumption.

39. There was some evidence of reductions in trans fat and saturated fat intake and, for some age groups, reductions in non-milk extrinsic sugars intake. However, changes should be interpreted with caution given the small sample size, differences in the dietary methodology between the rolling programme and the previous NDNS, and over sampling of weekends in year 1 of the rolling programme. Re-modelling work had been carried out on the older NDNS datasets to make them more comparable with the new data but there remained some methodological differences which led to uncertainty in interpreting changes between the two sets of data. Members questioned the criteria for use of descriptive terms such as 'similar', 'higher/increased', 'lower/decreased', etc., and considered it might be helpful to set out consistent criteria for these. It was suggested that to avoid confusion, the term 'significantly' might be restricted to describing outcomes supported by statistical analyses.

40. Members made various comments about the methodological differences between the NDNS rolling programme and previous NDNS, and potential implications of these. There was a specific discussion regarding the appropriateness of remodelling of previous (7-day) data to be comparable with current (4-day) data (rather than the reverse). Members were assured that decisions were taken in accordance with statistical advice, and also reminded that advice on statistical matters had been sought and followed and that SACN had been represented on the NDNS Project Board and was consulted in developing the methodology for the rolling programme. FSA would be seeking a SACN representative to replace the late Professor Sheila Bingham on the NDNS Project Board.

Action: Dr A Tedstone

41. Dr Tedstone would consider how best to engage with SACN in future on methodological issues for NDNS and in particular to take its views before tendering for a new contract.

Action: Dr A Tedstone

Agenda item 5 – Working Group updates

Sub Group on Maternal and Child Nutrition (SMCN)

42. Dr Tony Williams updated Members on the main activities of SMCN. Members were informed that the draft report on *The Influence of maternal, fetal and child nutrition on the development of chronic disease in later life* was released for scientific consultation on 8 February 2010. Dr Williams thanked the Secretariat and the drafting group for their help with this report.

Energy Working Group

43. Professor Alan Jackson informed the Committee that the Energy Working Group will discuss the responses to the recent scientific consultation at its next meeting on 12 April 2010. The Working Group anticipates finalising the report for consideration by SACN at the June 2010 main meeting.

Carbohydrates Working Group

44. Professor Ian Macdonald updated the Committee, informing them that the Carbohydrates Working Group last met on 29 January 2010 and good progress has been made. Members were updated on the Leeds University led systematic review on cardiometabolic health and Dr Peter Sanderson and Professor Ian Johnson's progress on the Carbohydrates and Gastrointestinal Cancer report. The next Working Group meeting will be held in April 2010.

45. Professor Macdonald informed the Committee that both Professor Angus Walls and Professor Ian Young have been co-opted onto the Working Group.

Iron Working Group

46. The Committee were fully updated on deliberations of the Iron Working Group at agenda items 1 and 2.

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

47. Professor Alan Jackson reminded the Committee that, albeit slowly, progress was being made on the ANANF report.

Agenda item 6 – Government updates on nutrition related activities**FSA (SACN/10/04)**

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

- *Nutrient analysis programme* – An external contractor is now responsible for managing this programme, which allows a faster response to changes in food composition.
- *Dietary Survey of Infants and Young Children* – This survey is currently at the pilot testing stage and Dr Tony Williams is the SACN representative on the project management board.
- *FSA Nutrition Research Review* – Overall the comments have been positive. It is anticipated that the review report will be published in March 2010.

49. It was requested that details about how the *Saturated Fat and Energy Intake Programme* will be evaluated be included in the next FSA Update.

Action: Secretariat

DH (SACN/10/05)

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

- Latest data from Health Survey for England indicates that obesity levels in children aged 2-10 were levelling out which is supported by data from the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)
- *Healthy Start* – The number of families claiming Healthy Start has been steadily increasing in recent months and are anticipated to increase by about 12% during the current financial year. In order to boost the uptake of Healthy Start Vitamins, a new vitamin voucher was introduced in November 2009. NHS orders for both children's and women's vitamin supplements have doubled between October and December 2009.

- *Healthier options in convenient stores* – Phase 1 has been completed and sales data from participating stores indicates a rise in sales of fresh fruit and vegetables of between 33 and 47%. Phase 2 will be rolled out in the South West, the East Midlands and the West Midlands.
- *Food promotion to children* – Ofcom reported a 34% reduction in children's exposure to HFSS advertising in their first review. They will conduct a further review which will focus on whether or not the advertising restrictions are having the anticipated effects. It was clarified that government had agreed to permit product placement in the four categories of tv programme allowed by the EU Directive - cinema films, films and series made for tv and video-on-demand, sports programmes, and light entertainment programmes. Legislation will be laid before parliament shortly.

Devolved Health Departments (SACN/10/06)

Northern Ireland

51. Dr Naresh Chada gave an update on activities in Northern Ireland, highlighting in particular:

- *Breastfeeding Strategy* – A review of the Breastfeeding Strategy for Northern Ireland is nearing completion and will inform the regional approach to breastfeeding in order to make recommendations on the way forward.
- *Obesity Prevention Steering Group (OPSG)* – The OPSG plans to produce a report on progress of implementation of current approaches to tackle obesity in the adult population and to promote physical activity.

Wales

52. Maureen Howell gave an update on activities in Wales, highlighting in particular:

- *Obesity* – An obesity pathway has been developed and Change4Life is being rolled out in Wales to be launched on 10th March 2010.
- *Food in Hospitals* – A vending programme is being supported by work to reduce unhealthy food and drink retailed in hospitals and an assessment will be

made of nutritional standards in participating hospitals with data collected through the mandatory reporting process.

- *Climbing Higher: Creating an Active* – Which builds on the work of the Climbing Higher 2005 initiative, was launched in January 2010. The initiative aims to improve physical activity through targeted programmes.

Scotland

53. A written update was made available.

EFSA (SACN/10/09)

54. A written update was made available.

AOB

Sustainability Development Commission Report (SACN/10/07)

55. A copy of the Sustainability Development Commission report: *Setting the table – Advice to Government on priority elements of sustainable diet*, was circulated to Members for information.

Vitamin D correspondence (SACN/10/08)

56. The Chair informed the Committee of the recent correspondence with Mr Rufus Greenbaum on vitamin D, and that the original letter and SACN's response is provided in paper SACN/10/08.

Next meeting

57. The next meeting will be held on 7 June 2010.

Meeting close

Questions from external attendees

58. Mr Rufus Greenbaum explained the reasoning behind his letter to Professor Alan Jackson and reiterated his concerns regarding the recommended levels of vitamin D in SACN's position statement *Update on Vitamin D (2007)*. It was explained to Mr Greenbaum that at the time this position statement was made there was a lack of evidence available to change the recommendation made by the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy in its report *Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom (1991)*. It was also noted that many of the issues raised in the aforementioned letter related to risk management considerations, and therefore outside the Committee's remit. The Committee reassured Mr Greenbaum that it views vitamin D as an important issue and that it intends to undertake work on this issue in the future.