

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Paper for information: Parliamentary Questions Related to SACN

Agenda item: 8

Please see attached paper for information.

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Parliamentary Questions Related to SACN

1. The following responses were drafted by the Secretariat for the Secretary of State for Health (SOSH) in response to questions from Members of Parliament. There were no substantive changes between the responses and the SOSH reply as published in Hansard.

List of Parliamentary Questions in this Document:

Item	Hansard Reference	Date of Response	Member of Parliament
1)	23890,23885,23882	14/12/01	Mr Martyn Jones
2)	40300, 40302, 40301	28/02/02	Mr David Borrow
3)	49811	15/04/02	Mr Tim Boswell
4)	53200,53198	25/04/02	Mr Martyn Jones
5)	54245	01/05/02	Mr David Borrow
6)	69981, 69979, 69978 PQ 10475 unpublished	11/07/02	Mr John Gummer

1) Hansard Ref: 23890, 23885, 23882 From: Mr Martyn Jones (Clwyd South):

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what scientific evidence the Food Standards Agency based its statement on dietary salt and its effect on human health contained in its announcement on salt in bread on 29th November; and for what reason the statement was made by FSA before the salt review by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition had been completed.

Reply

I am advised that the statement was based on the finding of the Committee on the Medical Aspects of Food Policy, as recently endorsed by the Chief Medical Officer in his annual report for 2001, as well as the large body of scientific evidence on the issues. The statement is without prejudice to the work that the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition currently has in hand on salt.

23885: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which members of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition have participated in previous investigations into dietary salt and health conducted by (a) the Cardiovascular Review Group of the Committee on Medical Aspects and (b) other Government bodies since 1990.

Reply

The attached tables shows which SACN members were also members of the Committee of Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy (COMA, 1994), the COMA Cardiovascular Review Group (1994), the COMA panel on Dietary Reference Values (1991), and associated Working Group on minerals.

No SACN members were on the MAFF Consumer Panel (January 1999) which considered salt and health. The table also shows that no SACN members were participants of the 1997 workshop on salt organised at the request of the Department of Health by the Faculty of Public Health Medicine and the British Heart Foundation.

Biographies of SACN members can be obtained from: www.sacn.gov.uk.

SACN Member	Member of SACN subgroup	Member of COMA	Member of COMA	Member of COMA	Member of COMA	Participant at FPHM/B	Member of MAFF Consume
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	on salt	(1994)	Cardiovascular Review Group	Panel on DRVs (1991)	Panel on DRV Working Group on Minerals (1991)	HF Workshop (1997)	r Panel (1999)
Professor Alan Jackson (Chair)	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Professor Peter Aggett	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes (Chair)	-	-
Professor Annie Anderson	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professor Sheila Bingham	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Professor John Cummings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miss Gill Fine	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ms Paulette Jones	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dr Timothy Key	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professor Peter Kopelman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dr Anne Prentice	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professor Andrew Rugg-Gunn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dr Anita Thomas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mrs Stella Walsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dr Anthony	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Williams							
Professor Christine Williams	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

23882: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will list the membership of (a) the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition and (b) its sub groups.

Reply

Membership of the Committee, its subgroups and working groups, is set out below. Papers relating to the Committee and its groups are available through the Committee's Website. (www.sacn.gov.uk)

Scientific Advisory Committee On Nutrition (SACN)

The Main Committee Members are:

	NAME
Chair	Professor Alan Jackson. Professor of Human Nutrition, Southampton University.
Members	
1.	Professor Peter Aggett(OBE) Head of School, Lancashire Postgraduate School of Medicine and Health, Professor of Child Health and Nutrition. University of Lancashire.
2.	Professor Annie Anderson, Research Professor of Food Choice at the Centre for Public Health Nutrition Research, University of Dundee.
3.	Professor Sheila Bingham, Deputy Director of the Medical Research Council's Dunn Human Nutrition Unit, Cambridge.
4.	Professor John Cummings, Clinical Scientist at Dept of Molecular & Cellular Pathology, University of Dundee.
5.	Ms Gillian Fine, Company nutritionist at Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd.
6.	Ms Paulette Jones, Senior Mentoring Development Officer, DIVERT Trust, London.
7.	Dr Tim Key, Reader in Epidemiology at the University of Oxford, works at ICRF Cancer Epidemiology Unit in the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford.
8.	Professor Peter Kopelmann, Professor of Clinical Medicine, Assistant Warden (Education), Barts and The London, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of London.
9.	Dr Ann Prentice, Director, MRC Human Nutrition Research, Cambridge.

10.	Professor Andrew Rugg-Gunn University Clinical Professor, Newcastle University Dental School.
11.	Dr Anita Thomas, Practising Consultant Physician in general (internal) and geriatric medicine, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth.
12.	Mrs Stella Walsh Senior Lecturer, Leeds Metropolitan University. National Federation of Consumer Groups
13.	Dr Anthony Williams Senior Lecturer & Consultant in Neonatal Paediatrics, St George's Hospital, London.
14.	Professor Christine Williams Professor of Human Nutrition, University of Reading.

SACN: Working Group on Iron, Members are:

	NAME
Chair	Professor Peter Aggett Professor of Child Health and Nutrition Head of School, Lancashire Postgraduate School of Medicine and Health. Member of SACN
Vice Chair	Dr Ann Prentice, Vice Chair Director, MRC Human Nutrition Research, Cambridge Member of SACN
International Observer	Dr Bruno de Benoist Senior Advisor, Micronutrients Department of Nutrition for Health and Development World Health Organisation
	Members
1	Dr Philip Calder Fetal Origins of Adult Disease Division University of Southampton School of Medicine
2	Professor Sue Fairweather-Tait Head of Nutrition and Consumer Science Division Institute of Food Research
3	Professor Sally Grantham-McGregor Centre for International Child Health Institute of Child Health
5	Ms Paulette Jones Senior Mentoring Development Officer Divert Trust Lay Member of SACN
6	Dr Tim Key ICRF Cancer Epidemiology Unit Radcliffe Infirmary Oxford Member of SACN
7	Professor Joe Lunec Director of Chemical Pathology Leicester University

8	Professor Martin Pippard Professor of Haematology University of Dundee Medical School
9	Professor Mark Worwood Dept. of Haematology University of Hospital Wales

SACN: Subgroup on Risk, Members are:

	NAME
CHAIR	Professor John Cummings – SACN Member
	Professor Christine Williams – SACN Member
	Dr Tim Key – SACN Member

SACN: Subgroup on Salt, Members are:

	NAME
CHAIR	Professor Alan Jackson – SACN Chair
	Professor Peter Aggett – SACN Member
	Professor Sheila Bingham – SACN Member
	Gill Fine – SACN Member

2) Hansard Ref: 40300, 40302, 40301 From: Mr David Borrow (South Ribble)

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the remit is of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's review of the evidence on salt since 1994.

Reply

At the first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) Sub-group on salt (25th January 2002), the group agreed that its purpose was to review COMA's 1994 recommendation (for a 'reduction in the average intake of sodium by reducing salt intake by a third, from 9g to 6g per day') in the light of any new evidence, taking into account the submissions that had been received from interested parties; and to consider making recommendations for children.

40302: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the SACN will publish the evidence received from the stakeholders (a) during and (b) after the outcome of the dietary sodium review.

Reply

The minutes of the sub group's first meeting will be placed on the SACN website (www.sacn.gov.uk) once they have been agreed by the Chair and members. The agenda of the meeting and a list of papers and submissions submitted to SACN have already been placed on the website. Interested parties can request copies of papers through the SACN secretariat.

40301: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if stakeholders were (a) contacted by the SACN and (b) asked to submit evidence to the review on salt. (40301).

Reply

Interested parties were alerted to the review through information placed on the SACN website, which included a call for submissions on evidence. Four key stakeholders – the Food and Drink Federation, the British Retail Consortium, the Salt Manufacturers Association and Consensus Action on Salt and Health – were alerted to the intended review so that they could submit evidence if they so wished.

3) Hansard Ref 49811: From: Mr Tim Boswell (Daventry):

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition reviewing the available evidence in relation to salt in the diets of adults and children plans to report; and whether its report will be published.

Reply

The subgroup of the Committee has recently started its work. I am advised that at this stage it is not possible to be definite about a publication date, but the Committee hopes to produce a report before the end of the year.

4) Hansard Ref: 53200, 53198 From: Mr Martyn Jones (Clwyd South):

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's sub group on salt plans to produce an interim report of its review on the evidence on salt.

Reply

At present there are no plans for the Committee to produce an interim report. Papers relating to the activities of the sub group on salt can be found on the SACN website at www.sacn.gov.uk.

53198: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations have been presented to the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's sub-group on salt, other than the submissions sent to the secretariat in response to the call for evidence. (53198).

Reply

All of the representations presented to the Committee arose from the call for evidence.

5) Hansard Ref: 54245 From: Mr David Borrow (South Ribble):

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what role the Department of Health plays in the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's review of the evidence on salt; in what form the SACN will publish the results of their consideration of evidence on salt in the diets of adults and children; and whether consultees will be given the opportunity to comment on the draft of SACN's report on salt prior to publication. (54245).

Reply

The Department of Health provides the joint Secretariat for SACN, with the Food Standards Agency.

SACN's review of salt will be the first such report published by this new Committee (which held its first meeting in June 2001). The final form of the report has not yet been decided. It will be placed on the SACN website to make it available to stakeholders as soon as it has been agreed by the Committee. There are no plans to conduct consultation on the report before this is done.

6) Hansard Ref: 69981, 69979, 69978, PQ10475 (unpublished) From: Mr John Gummer (Suffolk Coastal):

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the Food Standards Agency's Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition expects to contact the interested parties who submitted evidence to its review on salt and inform them of the procedure involved in the assessment of evidence.

Reply

Information on the procedure used by the Salt Subgroup to assess evidence is available to stakeholders through the minutes and papers of the meetings which have been placed on the SACN web site (www.sacn.gov.uk).

69979: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if the Food Standards Agency's Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition's sub-group on salt received copies of the references, studies, research and evidence listed in the submissions.

Reply

All the evidence referred to in the submissions was made available to the Salt Subgroup.

69978: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what other evidence the Food Standards Agency's Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition will use in their review of the evidence on salt.

Reply

Members of the Salt Subgroup requested a range of evidence in addition to that highlighted in submissions by stakeholders. This evidence is listed in the minutes of the meetings placed on the SACN website (www.sacn.gov.uk).

PQ10475: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether verbal summaries of the submissions were given to the sub-group on salt of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Food Standards Agency.

Reply

Subgroup members received complete copies of all the submissions. The Subgroup secretariat provided a verbal summary, by way of introduction, as each submission came up for discussion by the Subgroup.