



Paper for discussion: Energy requirements working group

Agenda Item: 07

Members are requested to discuss and agree the terms of reference and membership of the Energy Requirements working group.

Energy Requirements Working Group

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Background

In June, SACN discussed the Interim Report of FAO/WHO/UNU Energy Consultation on Human Energy Requirements (ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/nutrition/human_energy_requirements.pdf), the final Report of which is due for publication later this year. The Committee highlighted a number of uncertainties regarding the energy intake recommendations made in the report; they sought clarification on how the evidence had been used to develop the recommendations and the implications of the recommendations with regard to current UK energy recommendations.

COMA last considered energy requirements in 1991 in their report *Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the UK* (Department of Health, 1991). Since then National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) data has consistently shown that many adults and children are not achieving Dietary Reference Values (DRV) for energy. For example, in the 2000/1 survey of adults aged 19-64 years, both sex and all age groups had mean energy intakes significantly lower than the appropriate Estimated Average Requirement (EAR). Also, in common with the UK health surveys, NDNS data show that obesity levels within the population are increasing despite an apparent failure to achieve EAR. Although it is recognised that under-reporting of food intake is responsible for at least some of the discrepancy between measured energy intake and EAR values (Henderson *et al*, 2004), these observations have led the Agency to question the robustness of the COMA DRV for energy.

Terms of reference

SACN have agreed to form a working group which will include co-opted expertise. The group is asked to:

- Consider the recommendations made in the Report of FAO/WHO/UNU Energy Consultation on Human Energy Requirements in the context of the DRVs for energy
- Identify discrepancies and revise, as necessary, the DRVs for energy.

Membership

The working group will comprise SACN Members Professor Alan Jackson (to be agreed), Dr Anthony Williams and Mrs Stella Walsh, and co-opted experts Professor Joe Millward, Professor Marios Elia and Professor Andrew Prentice.

References:

Department of Health. Dietary Reference Values for Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom. Report of the Panel on Dietary Reference Values of the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy: 41. (1991). London, HMSO.

Henderson L, Gregory J, Irving K, Swan G. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey: adults aged 19 to 64 years. Volume 2: Energy, protein, carbohydrate, fat and alcohol intake (2003). London, The Stationery Office.