



Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

**21<sup>st</sup> MEETING**  
**6<sup>th</sup> June 2007, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH**

**Draft Minutes**

<b>Chairman</b>	Professor Alan Jackson
<b>Members</b>	Professor Peter Aggett Professor Annie Anderson Professor John Cummings Dr Paul Haggarty Professor Tim Key Professor Ian Macdonald Dr David Mela Dr Ann Prentice Mrs Stella Walsh Dr Anthony Williams Christine Williams
<b>Government Observers and other attendees</b>	Mr Finn Romanes (Scottish Executive) Mrs Maureen Howell (Welsh Assembly) Mr Noel Griffin (FSA) Ms Gillian Swan (FSA) Dr Patrick Miller (FSA) Mr Rick Pendrous (Food Manufacturing Magazine) Ms Karen Tonks (Tesco)
<b>Secretariat</b>	Dr Alison Tedstone (FSA) Ms Lynda Harrop (FSA) Dr Elaine Stone (FSA) Dr Sheela Reddy (DH) Ms Rachel Coomber (DH) Mrs Vicki Pyne (FSA)

**Agenda item 1 – Chair’s welcome**

1. The Chair welcomed members to the twenty first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN).
2. Apologies were received from Professors Sheila Bingham and Peter Kopelman, from Dr Anita Thomas and Rosemary Hignett (FSA).

3. Members were invited to declare any changes of interest. None were declared.
4. Thanks were conveyed from Dame Deidre Hutton to the Committee in regard to their work on folic acid, in particular to Professor Sheila Bingham for her role as Chair of the folate sub-group.

**Agenda Item 1 – Minutes of previous Committee meeting (7 February 2007) (SACN/07/min/04)**

5. Members were invited to comment on the minutes of the meeting on 7 February 2007 (SACN/07/min/01).
6. There was a request from FSA Scotland that paragraph 63 should be re-worded as follows: *"There was a query about co-ordination of nutrition policy between FSA Scotland (FSAS) and the Scottish Executive. The Scottish Executive work in partnership with FSAS on Diet and Nutrition policy through complementary policy documents; Eating for Health - Meeting the challenge (2004) and the FSA strategic plan 2005-2010 (2005)".* This was agreed by Members.
7. The remainder of the minutes were agreed as a correct record of the SACN meeting on 7 February 2007.

**Matters Arising Action Check List (SACN/07/11)**

8. The Chair reported progress on matters arising from previous meetings. Members were invited to comment.

*SACN/05/05 – Agriculture and the link with Food and Health Workshop*

9. Professor Christine Williams had previously agreed to chair the workshop and requested clarification on the remit of the group and purpose of the workshop. She suggested that topics covered should be kept broad.

**Action: Secretariat**

SACN/05/40 – Carbohydrate subgroup – *Review of data on carbohydrates*

10. The Chair confirmed that the workshop has taken place and will be discussed as  
Agenda item 2

SACN/06/16, SACN/06/17, SACN/06/37 – *Nutritional health of the population report, Further analysis on National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) 19-64 years, NDNS Synthesis paper*

11. These papers would be discussed under agenda item 3

SACN/06/22, SACN/07/07 – *Scottish Executive Updates*

12. Mr Finn Romanes was in attendance for Dr Fiona Bissett and it was agreed to carry these actions over to the next meeting in order for them to be properly addressed.

**Action: Scottish Executive**

SACN/06/29 – *Selenium and Health paper*

13. It was agreed that the paper should be discussed under Agenda item 4
14. The need for a standardised approach to alert experts of SACN reports was discussed. If reports are published on the web, it is difficult to cite them as authoritative documents. It was suggested that reports could be placed on a web based publishing site, which will enable them to be cited as other routine scientific publications.
15. The Secretariat agreed to raise the issue with the FSA's Chief Scientist (Dr Andrew Wadge) and to draft a dissemination strategy.

**Action: Secretariat**

*SACN/07/10 – Nutrition and health claims legislation*

16. It was agreed that an update on the legislation would be given at the next meeting. In particular, clarification was requested on whether breast milk substitute claims would be covered by the legislation (ref SACN/07/min/01).

**Action: Secretariat**

*SACN/07/02 – SACN Meeting arrangements*

17. The Secretariat was still considering the option of holding meetings outside London. An amendment to the SACN website about the availability of papers before the meetings was requested to be changed so that it was more realistic.

**Action: Secretariat**

*SACN/07/04 – Vitamin D paper*

18. Dr Sheela Reddy confirmed that the vitamin D paper was complete and had been published on the SACN website. A printed version of the report, which is a TSO publication, with ISBN number would be available for 15<sup>th</sup> June

*SACN/07/05 – Low Income and Diet and Nutrition Survey report (LIDNS)*

19. It was confirmed that the LIDNS report will be launched at the Nutrition Society meeting in the summer with a public launch a week prior to this meeting. Members would receive a detailed executive summary at this time and the full report would be presented to the Committee for the October meeting.

**Action: Secretariat**

*AOB*

20. Issues of Committee process would be covered at the meeting in October.

**Action: Secretariat**

**Agenda item 2 – Carbohydrate Terms of Reference (SACN/07/12)**

21. The Chair welcomed Dr Elaine Stone from the FSA who outlined the proposed terms of reference for the carbohydrate working group as follows:
- Review the evidence for a role of dietary carbohydrate in colonic health (including colon cancer, irritable bowel syndrome, constipation)
  - Review the role of dietary carbohydrates in the development of metabolic syndrome (including role of glycaemic index of different carbohydrates, development of insulin resistance, and risk of obesity)
  - Review the terminology, classification and definitions of types of carbohydrates in the diet
22. Agreement of a term of reference for carbohydrate and dental health was subject to discussions with the Department of Health but the importance of this area was acknowledged.
23. It was agreed that Professor Ian Macdonald would chair the working group, which would consist of four subgroups to tackle each of the subject areas.
24. Although there was support for the use of systematic reviews to collect the data, there was acknowledgement of the limitations of this method. Therefore it was considered important to ensure that the terms of reference and questions posed are framed properly, perhaps by including specific criteria for review within the terms of reference.
25. It was confirmed that the order of the terms of reference, with the ToR for a review of carbohydrate terminology at number 3, was such that it would allow for the work of Codex Alimentarius on carbohydrates to be progressed.
26. Two amendments were agreed: that the term metabolic health should be used instead of metabolic syndrome; and that colorectal should be used instead of 'colonic'.

27. Other areas suggested for inclusion were:

- Novel carbohydrates – should be considered for term of reference 3.
- Obesity – this was raised for consideration although it was noted that the data relating to obesity and carbohydrate is limited to short term feeding studies and there are no longer term longitudinal data. Therefore, it is important to investigate relationships with other co-morbidities.
- Glycobiology – the role of glycobiology in cancer should be considered.

28. It was noted that the timescale for the carbohydrate work will be long. The WHO is working on carbohydrate definitions and it is proposed to wait for their work to be published. The conclusion paper has been completed and is due to be published in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition in 3 months.

29. A meeting would be arranged for the autumn. Members to suggest any suitable external candidates for the working group.

**Action: Secretariat and Members**

**Agenda item 3 – NDNS Paper 1-adults 19-64 Years further analysis, NDNS paper 2- The nutritional health of the population, NDNS synthesis paper- The nutritional well being of the population (SACN/07/13, SACN/07/14, SACN/07/15)**

30. The Chair welcomed Gillian Swan who presented the three NDNS papers. The Committee were informed of the intention to publish the papers as one document in the autumn.

31. Some general comments were given on the papers:

- Clarity over use of terms cereals and breakfast cereals was requested.
- Lack of discussion in relation to energy imbalance in terms of nutrient status needed to be addressed.
- A caution about confidence of interpretation was requested due to possible underestimation of intakes.

- Expansion on the section covering government policies and a comment on why their impact might be limited was requested.
- Comment was made that it would be appropriate for a clear summary statement to be made on the need for immediate action. Any such paragraph could be included in a press release.

**Action: Christine Williams**

32. Detailed comments on NDNS paper 07/15 were invited. These are summarised as follows:

- The word “increasing” should be omitted for alcohol intake as even at low levels of intake alcohol can have an effect on chronic disease.
- Wording about red meat consumption needed addressing.
- Ensure consistency in the messages from this and vitamin D paper.

33. Detailed comments on NDNS paper 07/14 were invited. These are summarised as follows:

- It was recommended that the vitamin D paper be cited where the threshold for low status is described and that it would be useful to indicate that, were a higher threshold of vitamin D sufficiency to be used, as is being advocated by some researchers, the prevalence of low vitamin D status in the UK would be greater.
- The use of statins needs to be clarified in relation to the section on cholesterol.
- Inconsistencies in the use of the terms “high fat” need to be addressed.
- Need clarification between LDL and HDL cholesterol in terms of risk factors.
- The problem of misreporting should be discussed in terms of why there is a lack of association between nutritional intake and status.

34. Detailed comments on NDNS paper 07/13 were invited. These are summarised as follows:

- It was suggested that it would be useful to describe how non-dietary characteristics were used in the analysis.
- A point was raised whether suitable statistical adjustments had been made for multiple comparisons when drawing conclusions. This concern was noted, but was considered unlikely to change the overall conclusions.
- It was suggested that the data should be analysed by smoking status to investigate covariance of certain parameters.
- The folate report has already been published and does not refer to folate and homocysteine, as is inferred by this section.
- It was suggested that error bars should be included on the graphs.

35. The papers would be amended and circulated to Members by correspondence.

**Action: Secretariat**

#### **Agenda item 4 – Selenium and Health paper (SACN/07/16)**

36. The Chair posed the question about whether the paper provided sufficient new evidence to justify a full risk assessment on selenium. It was noted that there are ongoing trials which will report over the next two to three years. It would be prudent to await the outcome of these trials before conducting a full risk assessment.

37. It was therefore agreed that the final draft of the paper could be approved by email and published on the SACN website.

**Action: Secretariat**

38. Some amendments were requested, including:

- Clarification about whether there are there any vulnerable groups in terms of selenium status.
- Inclusion of a caveat to state that there is variability in the selenium levels of food, since it is dependent on the soil that the plant material was grown in.

- Due to the long timescale of the review, there is the need to ensure that any emerging evidence of importance is captured.

## **Agenda item 5 – Working group and subgroup updates**

### **Maternal and Child Nutrition (SMCN)**

39. Dr Anthony Williams gave an update from the SMCN working group and outlined the main areas that had been discussed:

- Infant feeding survey – The findings showed a significant increase in the incidence of breastfeeding by about 5%, however only 1% of mothers were exclusively breastfeeding up to 6 months. It also showed the proportion of mothers introducing solids before 4-months has fallen from 85% to 51%, a trend evident in all four countries. However, there was concern that a half of mothers were not following guidelines for preparing infant formula. This highlights a need to increase professional support for mothers on feeding practice.
- WHO Growth Standards consultation – The majority of responses to the consultation were in favour of adopting the standards with a single disjunction at 2 years of age.
- Lancet series on Child Development – This review of the effect of nutritional interventions on child development in developing countries concludes that the earlier the intervention the greater economic dividend. There is a potential need for a risk assessment on similar data of relevance to the UK. Gaps in national nutritional status data about children under 18 months have been previously highlighted.
- The Chief Medical Officer report “Health is Global: Proposals for a Government-wide Strategy” - A response to this report, which described how the UK can contribute to promoting global health, is currently being composed. The working group felt that the report should emphasise more strongly the importance of malnutrition as a leading cause of death and the importance of nutrition in promoting global health. Members noted that the advice on maternal and child nutrition from DfID, spans all government departments and that it is not easy to identify nutrition priorities. It was agreed

that a representative from DfID would be invited to the next SACN meeting to provide an update on nutrition activities as it was agreed that advice on nutrition for DfID was within the remit of SACN.

**Action: Secretariat**

- Members were informed that the European Commission intended to review the current Directive on cereal-based weaning foods for infants and young children and that a formal response incorporating comments from the Subgroup was being composed.

### **Growth Standards**

40. Members were informed that responses to the WHO Growth Standards consultation had been sent to the joint SACN/RCPCH group for comment and that the aim was to finalise and publish the group's recommendations by the end of June.

### **Energy**

41. The next energy working group meeting is scheduled for 7th September.

42. Members agreed there needs to be harmonisation between the approaches used by the Energy Working Group and EFSA in drawing up energy requirements. Issues of duplication and efficiency also needed to be addressed. Secretariat to discuss this issue with the Chief Scientist.

**Action: Secretariat**

### **Iron**

43. Members were informed that the iron report was progressing and a draft would be presented at the SACN meeting in October.

### **Approaches to the Nutritional Assessment of Novel Foods (ANANF)**

44. A paper for ANANF was also currently being worked on and it is anticipated that a draft report will be ready for the next SACN meeting.

## **Agenda item 6 – Government update on nutrition related activities**

### **FSA (SACN/07/17)**

45. Dr Alison Tedstone provided an update on FSA activity, highlighting the following points:

- FSA has recommended mandatory fortification of food stuffs with folic acid. There will be a Board meeting in June to discuss whether flour or bread should be subject to fortification.
- Work has now commenced on the NDNS rolling programme.
- The Salt campaign is in its third phase and will be drawing to a close.
- A draft strategic plan to address saturated fat and energy in the nation's diet has been released for consultation and comments would be welcome from members.
- FSA has secured the withdrawal of goat's milk being sold as infant formula.

46. A Member commented that there should be consistency about the terms used i.e. 'energy' should be used instead of 'total fat' (Paragraph 15).

47. Members queried why the FSA had changed their guidance on what is a little/ a lot of saturated fat, sugar and salt and what this now means. Secretariat to update members at the next SACN meeting.

**Action: Secretariat**

48. The Chair welcomed Dr Patrick Miller, the secretary of the new General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS). Dr Patrick Miller provided background about the GACS and informed members that its remit is to provide assurance that the processes used by Agency Committees are sufficiently robust. GACS will also look at cross cutting issues such as horizon scanning and science priorities.

49. A Chair, 4 expert members and 2 lay members are currently being sought by advertisement and the deadline for applications is 21<sup>st</sup> June. It is anticipated that

the committee will be established by the end of the year. Expertise is particularly required in the areas of social sciences and food technology.

50. It was asked whether the LIDNS is feeding into the rolling pilot NDNS programme. Dr Alison Tedstone stated that this was not the case, as the NDNS is representative of the UK population, including ethnic minorities. It is possible to over sample specific groups in the rolling survey. It is hoped that by the changes made to the methodology response rates can be maximised. The survey will be piloted before the actual roll out.
51. Dr Alison Tedstone confirmed that a database for processed food has been set up that used information on the label and is not intended to replace McCance and Widdowson food composition data, that uses analytical and compositional information.

#### **DH (SACN/07/18)**

52. Dr Sheila Reddy presented the paper highlighting the following points:
- Children in reception are being measured as part of the National Weighing and Measuring Programme. Members were informed that new guidance had been developed and that letters had been sent by Ministers to schools to ensure a higher response.
  - Foresight's report "Tackling Obesity: Future Challenges" has been published.
  - Healthy Start was rolled out in November 2006 and vitamins for both mothers and children were now available free to beneficiaries. It was confirmed that both written and verbal advice is also given to mothers – secretariat to check if there is a standard protocol for this.

#### **Action: Secretariat**

- A scoping study for the evaluation of Healthy Start had been commissioned and will be available shortly. Members would have the opportunity to comment on this.
- Members were informed that the Obesity and Social Marketing programme had been absorbed into existing initiatives.

53. Members enquired whether there were any guidelines on standards for meals for adults that compare with the guidelines on school meals for children. It was confirmed that the FSA are working on institutional guidelines.

54. Members requested clarification of the Obesity National Support Team and were informed that the team had been set up to help deliver PSA targets in different areas to assist delivery by local PCTs.. It was agreed that information on the exact format of this team will be disseminated at a later date.

55. Members asked if the data from the National Weighing and Measuring Programme is available for further analysis. Dr Sheela Reddy confirmed that data was being collected centrally, by the SE PH Observatory.

### **Devolved Health Departments (SACN/07/19)**

#### **Wales**

56. Mrs Maureen Howell for the Welsh Assembly presented the paper and highlighted the following main points:

- A review of the curriculum in schools is being carried out, it is hoped that cookery will be placed back on the curriculum. An action plan has been approved.
- A draft Quality of Food Strategy has been produced and will be released for consultation over the summer. This will feed into the Food Quality and Action Plan.
- The Exercise Referral Scheme is being rolled out across Wales and is subject to a randomised control trial which will investigate the effectiveness of this intervention.

#### **Scottish Executive**

57. Mr Finn Romanes for the Scottish Executive presented the paper and highlighted that the Scottish Grocers Federation (SGF) Healthy Living Programme is now in

its third phase – improving the quality of fresh produce in grocers. Scottish Executive DH and the public health registrar have agreed that there needs to be increased availability of fresh produce in grocers.

58. It was mentioned that the School Health Promotion and Nutrition Act which requires local authorities to make sure all schools are health promoting, has had its first reading in Parliament and nutrition standards have been modified. Clarification of what constitutes the nutritious snacks was requested.

**Action: Scottish Executive**

59. A query was raised about the Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD) and whether it was their responsibility for the provision of healthy nutritious food. It was confirmed that it was essential for SERAD and the Scottish Health Department to work in collaboration on this. Examples were requested.

**Action: Scottish Executive**

## **AOB**

### **Nutrition Professionals Confederation (NPC)**

60. The Chair informed members that an NPC meeting is scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> June. The current objective is for each Member of the group to review the position of their organisation against the commitments made in 2004 and to create a framework for the group to move forwards in the autumn.

### **Hard water**

61. The EU regulations on bottled water are being reviewed. Bottled water is required to be sold with a certain level of hardness, which is related to the risk of heart disease (Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy Cardiovascular Disease report, 1994). A paper will be brought to the Committee in October.

**Action: Secretariat**

**FSA**

62. Dr Alison Tedstone informed the committee of staff changes at the FSA which are as follows:

- Mrs Rosemary Hignett is standing down as the FSA SACN observer and would be replaced by Dr Alison Tedstone.
- Dr Elaine Stone is replacing Dr Alison Tedstone the Agency scientific secretariat to SACN.
- Mr Matthew Lynch is leaving the Agency and would be replaced in due course.

**Close of Committee business**

63. The Chair invited questions from the two external observers.

64. Mr Rick Pendrous, Editor of Food Manufacturing Magazine, introduced himself to the Committee and raised the following points:

- He could assist in dissemination of published information, as discussed earlier in the meeting.
- Enquired about the collection of genetic data in the NDNS and the position SACN had on this. The Chair emphasised that individual members have certain views, but they do not represent SACN's formal standpoint on the issue. It was confirmed that data is anonymised and that subjects taking part in studies are given all the information surrounding the study prior to giving consent. A possible problem arises when an individual has been identified as having a particular genotype that would increase their risk of disease.

65. Ms Karen Tonks, company nutritionist for Tesco, introduced herself to the Committee and raised the following points:

- Noted that food industry are also interested in reports issued by SACN and suggested that reports are disseminated to industry. Ms Karen Tonks also commented that a stakeholder briefing to highlight and discuss the reports would also be useful.

- Stated that in addition to McCance and Widdowson's *The Composition of Foods*, other databases are available, including the existence of the Taylor Nelson database of foods. However it was noted that this would not come under the remit of SACN.

66. The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting.