



Minutes of the fourth Meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Committee, held on
Tuesday, 13 March, 2012 at 10.30am
safefood, Block B, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

PRESENT:

Dr Ken Baird, Chairperson (KB)
Ms Tina Leonard (TL)
Dr Wayne Anderson (WA)
Mr Robert Huey (RH)
Mr Barney Heywood (BH)
Ms Maria Jennings (MJ)
Prof Margaret Barbara Elizabeth Livingstone (BL)
Dr Moira Dean (MD)
Prof Charles Daly (CD)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Martin Higgins, Chief Executive (MH)
Ms Fiona Gilligan, Director Marketing & Communications (FG)
Dr Aileen McGloin, Scientific Support Manager (AMcG)
Mr Ray Dolan, Director, Corporate Operations (RD)
Dr David McCleery, Chief Specialist Microbiology (DMcC)
Dr Marian Faughnan, Chief Specialist Nutrition, Human Health & Nutrition (MF)
Ms Emily Kelleher, Minute Secretary (EK)
Ms Julie Carroll, Minute Secretary (JC)

APOLOGIES:

Ms Amanda McCloat (AMcC), Mr Kenneth Carroll (KC), Dr Gary Kearney (GK),
Prof Martin Caraher (MC), Prof Shay Fanning, Dr James McIntosh (JMCI)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairperson welcomed all members to the fourth meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Committee (SAC). The apologies of AMcC, KC, GK, MC and JMcI were noted.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE SAC HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2011.

The minutes were adopted with no changes or amendments to be made.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Matters arising will be covered under Agenda item 5.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (oral)

There were no declarations of interest.

5. SAC AREAS OF WORK AND SUBGROUPS (SAC/2011/1&2)

The three subgroups of the SAC are emerging food safety issues, nutrition surveillance and body weight perception. Antimicrobial resistance remains a focus of the SAC.

a. Emerging Issues

The Emerging Issues Subgroup has met on three occasions to date. The group is made up of 8 members, 4 of whom are also members of the SAC. The final meeting will take place in early May with the report to be completed thereafter. The report outlines how to identify, address and deal with emerging food safety issues and has identified three key matters; how to identify and interact with various data sources; the need for networking and; the role of a knowledge broker. The report is designed in part to help encourage SMEs with horizon scanning.

Members discussed the commercial sensitivities around the idea of a knowledge broker. There are also ethical issues around when such an entity would inform regulatory authorities of a new issue. A question remains as to whether there is a role for **safefood** as the knowledge broker.

Noted: CD highlighted the challenge of collecting information and the need for collaboration with other stakeholders.

Noted: MJ advised that it may be worthwhile to speak with some of the FSA staff who are also working in this area.

b. Nutrition Surveillance

The draft Nutrition Surveillance Report has been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. It is likely to be finished by the end of April. There have

been 4 meetings of the Nutrition Surveillance Subgroup to date. Recommendations of the report are currently being reviewed by the two departments of health (NI & ROI). MF thanked all for their contribution.

Noted: WA suggested that to maximise value for money the vision for nutrition surveillance needs to be widened so that the data could be used by other stakeholders. WA queried the recommendation regarding the proposed data collection methodology and expressed concern that using such measures might provide adequate nutritional data but may not provide data on exposure to chemicals for the purpose of food safety surveillance. BL agreed the group would elaborate on this point and include other methods of data collection.

Noted: RH questioned whether the use of passive surveillance could be used in the report i.e. that data may be available in studies, or routinely collected for a purpose other than surveillance.

Noted: Discussion ensued around those most likely to fund such an activity. The Dept. of Agriculture is currently reviewing priorities for research into the future. The Subgroup has suggested that nutrition surveillance should be mainstreamed as a service much like infectious disease surveillance service.

c. Body weight perception

The Body Weight Perception Subgroup has met twice since June 2011 with 12 members of the advisory group, 5 of whom are drawn from the SAC. The report is broken into a) a description of the prevalence of overweight/obesity b) data on the prevalence of misperceptions c) influence of misperceptions d) consequences of such misperceptions e) learnings from other disciplines. A draft report has been circulated. AMcG discussed comments already received from members who had sent apologies.

Noted: TL suggested including a piece in report about the impact that TV shows like Operation Transformation (OT) have on communities. TL emphasised the need to add the influence of community involvement and peer support to the report. **safefood** is currently looking at how to measure/evaluate the programme.

Noted: Discussion ensued around health professional's recognition of the problem of overweight/obesity. Dr Anne Moorhead's research, commissioned by **safefood**, recommends providing relevant training. CFN will meet with the lead investigator from a similar TCD study to talk about possible collaboration.

d. Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

CFN gave an update of current activities relating to AMR. Teagasc are leading on

The development of a report on Salmonella. **safefood** are sponsoring a webinar for veterinary practitioners in early October.

Noted: RH emphasised the importance of maintaining a focus on this work and highlighted that there is no reliable data on antimicrobial usage for animals on IOI.

6. Consumer Focus Review (CFR)

AMcG advised that the Chicken, Finfish and Food Related Behaviour CFRs are completed and had been sent to members separately. The next CFR to be completed is the fruit and vegetable CFR, followed by 'Men's Health'. The main aim of the latter report is to explore differences between men and women in food safety and healthy eating attitudes and behaviours.

7. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

a. Stop the Spread

FG gave an overview and update of the Stop the Spread campaign including the objectives, and provided details of the new television advert, direct marketing, publicity, social media and research. Phase 2 and 3 of the campaign took place since the last SAC meeting. **Safefood** plans to air the same TV ad as used in Phase 3 of the campaign, which highlighted individual 'excuses', during May.

Noted: The contrasting reactions to the campaign in NI and ROI were discussed.

b. 'If you could see germs spread' food safety campaign

FG provided an overview of the food safety campaign 'If you could see germs', while DMCC gave an outline of the research underway on dishcloths, which will form the basis of the next phase of the campaign.

c. Operation Transformation

safefood sponsored Operation Transformation (OT) in January/February and will be working with the community groups who participated in OT to see how they can sustain their weight loss programmes.

d. Childhood Obesity Campaign

safefood is meeting with the HSE and the PHA in NI to discuss the proposal of a childhood obesity campaign.

e. Publications

FG outlined recent publications including the 'Nutrition Takeout Series –Part 1 Pizza'; Part 2 & 3 Burgers and Chinese Takeaway reports will be published during 2012.

f. Educational resources and initiatives

Recently published educational resources provided by **safefood** include 'Sammy and Sally Grow Together' for preschools and the 'Takeaway My Way' competition for secondary school students on the IOI, conducted in collaboration with St. Angela's, Sligo.

8. SAC Progress Report (SAC/2011/3)

SAC member had been provided with a progress report on key SAC related activities. DMcC provided additional information on the 5 knowledge networks that have been operating for a full year now. There are currently 999 members and the Knowledge Networks have been successful in providing a series of events and a range of services. Customer service is central to the networks.

9. Tour de table

MH advised that both ministers for health in NI and ROI have requested a review of **safefoods** remit. **safefood** is still waiting for terms of reference but is operating as usual. A separate NI review of **safefood**, FSA and PHA is to be due to take place in June.

- Noted:** RH suggested that **safefood** might want to consider a submission the Agri-Food strategy NI at this early stage.
- Noted:** BL highlighted iodine status (especially in girls of a reproductive age) as an issue of concern that **safefood** should consider. BL also suggested raising awareness of the levels of calories found in sandwiches and suggested there may be a role for **safefood** to complete research into this as part of the Nutrition Takeout Series.
- Noted:** WA asked whether members could have an overview of **safefood's** research programme at the next meeting.
- Noted:** MJ advised that the FSA are facing a number of reviews and changes with particular focus on FSA Scotland. The chief executive of the FSA is leaving in October 2012.
- Noted:** MD outlined the importance of a process evaluation in **safefood's** assessment of campaigns so that learnings can be applied to future campaigns by **safefood** and others. MD requested additional information re **safefood** STS campaign.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

MH proposed extending current SAC members term to include the next meeting

in order to complete the current research reports, pending discussion with the NSMC.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the **safefood** Advisory Committee is Tuesday October 2nd 2012