



**Second Meeting
UKNHCC
16 July 2021
Microsoft Teams meeting**

Final Minutes

Meeting held in closed session

Attendees

Chair

Professor Susan Fairweather-Tait

Members

Dr Robert Boyle – agenda items 4 to 7

Professor Judith Buttriss

Dr Francesca Crowe

Professor Alison Gallagher

Dr Darren Greenwood

Professor Marina Heinonen

Emeritus Professor Harry McArdle – agenda items 1 to 5

Emeritus Professor Anders Sjödin

Secretariat (PHE)

Ms Haley Bell

Dr Adrienne Cullum

Dr Jennifer Garry

Miss Celia Sabry-Grant

Official Observers

Mr Chika Edeh (Food Standards Scotland)

Ms Kerry Gribbin (Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland)

Ms Debby Webb (Department of Health and Social Care)

Other observers

Ms Martina Brayley (Public Health England (PHE); agenda item 5 only)

Ms Susannah Brown ((PHE); agenda item 5 only)

Ms Amber Clarke ((PHE; agenda item 5 only)
Ms Rachel Elsom ((PHE; agenda item 5 only)
Ms Neeve Pearce ((PHE; agenda item 5 only)

Agenda item 1 - Welcome, introductions and oral declaration of interests

1. The Chair welcomed members and observers to the second official meeting of the United Kingdom Nutrition and Health Claims Committee (UKNHCC), which was held virtually due to COVID-19 related national lockdown in England and other travel restrictions. Apologies were received from Stephen Hendry (Official observer, Food Standards Scotland).
2. Members were informed that Dr Robert Boyle would be joining the meeting later.
3. Dr Darren Greenwood was welcomed as a new co-opted member of the Committee. Members were informed that Dr Greenwood is a Senior Lecturer in Biostatistics at the University of Leeds.
4. Members were asked to formally introduce themselves and declare any changes to their declarations of interest since the last meeting.
5. Professor Harry McArdle reminded members of his membership with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) previously not formally listed on the Register of Interests. He also informed members of his reappointment until 2024 to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Working Group on Novel Foods and newly appointed Vice Chair to the Nutrition, Novel Foods and Food Allergens (NDA) Panel at EFSA.
6. Professor Susan Fairweather-Tait informed members of her newly appointed membership to the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN). She also informed members of her attendance at a consultants' meeting on long-term iron stable isotope labelling with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and a review she carried out on a grant proposal funded by the University of Auckland.
7. Professor Marina Heinonen informed members of her reappointment until 2024 to the EFSA Working Group on Novel Foods and of her new work with the Novo Nordisk Foundation on the evaluation of research grants.
8. Professor Alison Gallagher informed members of new peer review work with the Scottish Government's Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services (RESAS) Division and new appointment to the external reviewer panel for applications with Munster Technological University (MTU).
9. Dr Darren Greenwood shared his working areas of interest and informed members of a recent grant on iodine, birth outcomes and maternal health, and work on developing a potential web application.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 2 – Meeting notes of previous meeting for agreement (UKNHCC 21-06)

10. Members were invited to comment on the draft minutes from the first UKNHCC meeting held on 18 May 2021. A member raised a query on point 10, about adding a citation to the Scientific Opinion when it is published on the UKNHCC website on GOV.uk. Reasons for adding a citation were discussed and agreed. Members also discussed and agreed amendments to the phrasing of points 10 and 19.
11. A member raised a query on point 24 regarding the 30 day period after the Scientific Opinion is published and the process to handle comments received. It was confirmed by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) that the comments are not published, but are considered as part of the risk management process by the four-nation nutrition group (risk management group) as outlined in the [UK-wide common framework for nutrition-related labelling, composition and standards \(NLCS\)](#).
12. It was noted that the secretariat would make the agreed changes before publishing the final minutes on the UKNHCC website on GOV.uk.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 3 - Matters Arising (SACN 21-16)

13. The secretariat summarised the matters arising and actions taken since the previous meeting.
14. The secretariat updated members that they are continuing to explore options to ensure there are sufficient links between UKNHCC and the ACNFP. Members were informed that they would be kept updated on this.
15. Members were updated on the move of the Health Improvement Directorate at Public Health England (PHE) (which includes the UKNHCC Secretariat) to the [Office for Health Promotion](#) (OHP), which will sit within the DHSC. Members were assured of the ongoing need for, and function of, SACN and UKNHCC. It was noted that details of the move have not yet been finalised and members would be kept updated.
16. The Chair invited Official Observers to provide updates in addition to the circulated government update (SACN 21-16). No further updates were provided.

Agenda item 4 – 001UKNHCC Article 13(5) Health claim application- Lutein, zeaxanthin and meso-zeaxanthin and visual performance. *Applicant: Alliance Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (UKNHCC 21-07)*

17. The secretariat summarised the points agreed by members at the previous meeting, and subsequent actions taken in relation to the application. Members were reminded that they had reviewed two drafts of the Scientific Opinion since the previous meeting. The third draft reflected comments made and was shared in advance for consideration at this meeting.
18. Members discussed outstanding matters regarding:
- the combination of lutein, *meso*-zeaxanthin and zeaxanthin included in the evidence submitted
 - whether the literature review process was sufficiently robust to identify all available evidence submitted to substantiate the claim
 - the definition of pertinent and supporting evidence
 - methodological concerns surrounding the pertinent evidence
 - risk of bias and weighing the evidence
 - the phrasing, level of detail to include in reporting studies and layout of the scientific opinion
19. Members agreed actions to finalise the Scientific Opinion, including their view on characterisation, the claimed effect and whether a cause and effect relationship had been established.
20. Members were reminded that the legal deadline for publishing an opinion on the UKNHCC website, on GOV.uk is 6 September 2021 if no ‘stop the clock’ is ensued. It was agreed that the Scientific Opinion would be updated based on the changes agreed and would be circulated to the Committee for agreement via email correspondence before finalising for publication.

Action: Secretariat

21. An Official Observer raised a question on the UK risk assessment process in the instance that an EFSA opinion had already been published for the same claim. The secretariat advised that if the four-nation nutrition group (risk management group) are required to consider an application or request accompanied by an EFSA Scientific Opinion they will need to assess whether additional UK specific risk assessment is needed. Additional advice or risk assessment would be sought from the UKNHCC. The UKNHCC could take note of the EFSA opinion as a source of evidence but would make a risk assessment decision based on all the evidence submitted. It was noted that issues related to divergence are not within the remit of the UKNHCC and are considered by the four-nation nutrition group

(risk management group), as outlined in the [UK-wide common framework for nutrition-related labelling, composition and standards \(NLCS\)](#).

Agenda item 5 – Risk of Bias (RoB) overview (UNKHCC 21-08)

22. The Chair thanked members for reviewing the RoB material sent in advance of the meeting. Members discussed the importance of evaluating RoB. The secretariat provided an overview of the task members were asked to complete in advance of this meeting.
23. Members shared and discussed feedback on the process for filling in the Cochrane RoB 2 template using the guidance and crib sheet documents as an aid. Each of the five domains were discussed in detail while assessing RoB on one study. Members were invited to raise questions. Members agreed to complete assessments on additional studies to gain experience in using the Cochrane RoB MS Excel macro.
24. The secretariat agreed to collate questions and answers, for circulation after the meeting. The secretariat also agreed to circulate additional studies for members to assess RoB and to gain experience in using the Cochrane RoB Excel macro.

Action: Secretariat and Committee

Agenda item 6 – Follow-up on UKNHCC processes (UKNHCC 21-09)

25. The secretariat provided an overview of changes to the documentation for completing assessments, which were raised in the previous meeting.
26. Members discussed the process to assess applications and also queried the need to update guidance on the application form on the UKNHCC website, on GOV.uk. if there was any change to the process.
27. The secretariat raised points for discussion on the draft UKNHCC Framework for Evaluation of Evidence Submitted for the Substantiation of Nutrition and Health Claims. The Committee were invited to comment on items related to statistical methods, assessment of evidence for substantiating and supporting a health claim and integrating RoB assessment. It was suggested that these points could be discussed at a subsequent meeting. Members and the secretariat agreed to return to this at the next UKNHCC meeting and no changes would be made to the framework at this time.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda item 7 – AOB

28. The secretariat provided a brief overview of how to access and use software for sharing meeting papers and the other related documents. Members were invited to raise questions.

Action: Secretariat

29. The secretariat reminded members that the next Committee meeting would be held virtually on 8 October 2021. Members agreed to start the meeting at 9.15am.

Action: Committee

30. The secretariat reminded members that the Scientific Opinion would be shared once updated and would ask for final agreement from the Committee at that time.

31. The Chair closed the meeting, thanking the secretariat and Committee.

Meeting close