

Putting the record straight on the Peel meeting (Jan 21, 2016)

By Paul Connett, PhD

When I was invited to the meeting in Peel on January 21, 2016 I was under the impression that the idea was that members of the Peel Regional Council were to hear from a panel of experts in their fields on both the benefits of fluoridation and health concerns. I also had hoped that it would be fair and balanced, with equal representation from both sides. In reality, the pro-fluoridation side had three formal experts and the anti-side had only two. But making it more unfair and more unbalanced, the regional Medical Office of Health inserted herself as an “expert” which made the final tally 4 pro and two anti. Making this worse, neither the public nor the media were able to witness these shenanigans.

Another surprise was that **the day before** the expert hearing was due to take place one of the three mayors who sat on the regional council jumped the gun. Before she had heard a single word of expert testimony she endorsed fluoridation (covered widely in the media).

In our main testimony we were restricted to 20 minutes each.

The order of presentation appeared contrived to serve the interested of the pro-fluoridation side. I came after the pro-toxicologist had “poisoned the water”, and then after Hardy THREE pros gave their views. This “ordering” may have been a coincidence but for me it looked like a classic case of engineering consent by the Medical Officer of Health. Here are the details

- 1) First, to present was Dr. Juurlink from Toronto, who claimed that there was no valid evidence supporting the notion that fluoride was neurotoxic. His presentation was highly selective. I asked Dr. Juurlink after the meeting for a copy of his presentation and he indicated that I should get it from the Medical Officer of Health.

- 2) I presented after Dr. Juurlink and argued that while some of the IQ studies were weak, and one or two were done at high concentrations this was not true of all the studies and in risk assessment one was obliged to look at the best studies and the ones done at the lowest doses and to use safety factors to derive as safe dose that would be protective of all individuals in large population. If this was done with the Xiang et al, 2003a,b study where IQ lowered in a subgroup between 0.75 and 1.53 ppm, fluoridation would be unthinkable.
- 3) Dr. Hardy Limeback then summarized the evidence that swallowing fluoride did little to reduce tooth decay. He stressed that there was no individual-based randomized control trial (RCT) to establish the effectiveness of water fluoridation, which is the gold standard for epidemiology.
- 4) Dr. Howard Pollick went through all the authorities that endorsed fluoridation, without counteracting Dr. Limeback's specific arguments scientifically.
- 5) Dr. Myron Allukian repeated essentially Pollick's arguments on "authorities" asking the councilors if all these prestigious bodies would knowingly support a practice if they the practice was "ineffective or unsafe"
- 6) Then immediately before lunch the Medical Office of Health emphatically claimed that she and her staff had rigorously examined all the evidence of potential harmful effects of fluoride and concluded that there was no convincing evidence of harm, including fluoride's neurotoxic effects. At lunch I asked her for a copy of her report. She did not give me a firm "no" but left the matter somewhat vague.

Because the MOH's statement was so emphatic and categorical I have asked several people to see if they can get a copy of her presentation.

It is only in the last weeks that her review has become available and as I expected it is very biased and superficial. I have reviewed this elsewhere.

Providing an interesting book-end to this meeting – and in line with the notion of “engineered consent” - was the fact that the next day all three mayors endorsed fluoridation (without the benefit of having the written expert testimony in their hands). Under such circumstances the ability of the MOH to thrust her ‘testimony’ into the proceedings takes on even greater significance.

Several questions present themselves:

- 1) How does the MOH’s “review” compare with Jurlink’s review? Or is it one and the same thing?

We don’t know because Dr. Juurlink testimony has been redacted and his report to the MOH has not been made available despite my several requests.

- 2) How exhaustive is her review of the 300 plus animal and human studies that indicate that fluoride is neurotoxic and that there are no health concerns about fluoride exposures experienced by those drinking fluoridated water and getting fluoride from other common sources?

We now know the answer to this. It is highly superficial.

- 3) How specifically does she deal with Xiang et al, 2003a,b findings?

We know the answer to that to – she doesn’t!