WHA52.24 Prevention and control of iodine deficiency disorders

The Fifty-second World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on progress achieved in preventing and controlling iodine deficiency disorders;\(^{(1)}\)

Recalling resolutions WHA39.31, WHA43.2 and WHA49.13 on the prevention and control of iodine deficiency disorders;

Concerned that iodine deficiency remains a major threat to the health and development of populations worldwide and that it may result in goitre, stillbirth and miscarriage, neonatal and juvenile thyroid deficiency, dwarfism, brain damage and intellectual impairment, deaf mutism, spastic weakness and paralysis, as well as lesser degrees of loss of physical and mental function;

Recognizing that the elimination of iodine deficiency will therefore represent a major public health triumph of truly global proportions and an important contribution to national economic development,

1. COMMENDS the support provided by governments, international organizations, bilateral agencies and nongovernmental organizations, in particular the International Council for Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, in the struggle to eliminate iodine deficiency disorders throughout the world, and the progress to which they have contributed over the past decade to prevent and control iodine deficiency at global, regional and national levels;

2. COMMENDS the collaboration of the salt industry, its key role in making iodized salt available to populations at risk of iodine deficiency, and its initiative in highlighting iodization of salt at the Eighth World Salt Symposium (Salt 2000), The Hague, Netherlands, May 2000;

3. REAFFIRMS the goal of eliminating iodine deficiency disorders as a major public health problem, while recognizing that some countries still face considerable obstacles in meeting this goal and consequently require additional intensive support;
4. **URGES Member States:**

(1) to assess the extent and severity of iodine deficiency disorders, where they have not already done so;

(2) to redouble their efforts to promote universal salt iodization, including the adoption of relevant legislation, and to implement alternative strategies for iodine supplementation in areas where iodized salt is not yet available;

(3) to monitor the iodine status of their populations and the quality of iodized salt in all areas, including those where current iodine intakes are thought to be adequate, in order to gauge progress towards achieving the goal of sustainable elimination of iodine deficiency disorders as a public health problem;

(4) to collaborate in the process of verifying that the goal of sustainable elimination of iodine deficiency disorders as a public health problem has been achieved;

5. **REQUESTS the Director-General:**

(1) to provide, on request, technical support to Member States in formulating and implementing programmes for the control of iodine deficiency, including the development of appropriate communication strategies, and the promotion of effective programme implementation;

(2) to mobilize, and collaborate with, international and bilateral development agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector in support of the efficient and effective iodization of salt by both large- and small-scale salt producers, being cognizant of their particular characteristics;
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(3) to consider the elimination of iodine deficiency disorders as a priority programme for WHO and to provide technical support to Member States in establishing and strengthening systems for monitoring the iodine status of their populations and the quality of iodized salt, to identify the required financial and technical resources for this purpose, and to support Member States in developing links with the salt industry;

(4) to facilitate intercountry cooperation and collaboration for sustainable elimination of iodine deficiency disorders, in particular by developing and supporting subregional networks of laboratories to ensure adequate surveillance and monitoring of these disorders;

(5) to maintain and update the WHO global database on the prevalence of iodine deficiency disorders as a means of monitoring the status of control programmes, assessing progress towards eliminating iodine deficiency disorders, and increasing awareness of their public health implications;

(6) to report to the Health Assembly by 2005 on progress achieved in eliminating iodine deficiency disorders.

(Tenth plenary meeting, 25 May 1999 - Committee A, fourth report)
DECISIONS
Endnotes

1 (Popup - Popup)

1 Document A52/11.