## מדינת ישראל משרד הבריאות לשכת הבריאות המחוזית חיפה

State of Israel

Ministry of Health

Haifa District Health Office

4<sup>th</sup> December 2010

دولة إسرائيل وزارَة ألصحة دائرَة ألصحة أللّوائية حَيفا

## The Israeli NITAG

The Israeli NITAG was established about 40 years ago. Its formal name is The Advisory Committee on Infectious Diseases and Immunization. It consists of 15 members who are nominated by the Head of Public Health Services in the Ministry of Health. There is no formal process of recruiting potential members. The nomination is not limited by time.

Every member signs a declaration of conflict of interests immediately after the nomination. In the beginning of every meeting the head of committee asks if there is conflict of interests. If there is, the member does not participate in voting. There is no written document on conflict of interests.

The terms of reference of the committee are short:

- 1. To recommend to the Ministry of Health on the surveillance of infectious diseases and their prevention.
- 2. To recommend on the routine vaccination program: introduction of new vaccines and updating the present program according to new developments.

There is a separate committee for travellers' medicine and another one for emergency outbreaks like Influenza pandemic and bioterror.

All the members participate in voting, including the 5 ex officio members who represent the Ministry of Health. It is a multidisciplinary committee which consists of public health experts, epidemiologists, specialists in pediatrics, pediatric infectious diseases, bacteriology, virology and public health nursing. The Head of the committee in the last 15 years is a public health physician. Vaccine manufacturers are not represented in the committee but they may be invited to present data. The members are not paid except for travelling expenses. The committee meets 6-11 times a year; most of the meetings are telephone conferences.

Since 2007 the minutes of the meeting are published in the Internet site of the committee. This very high transparency did not cause any trouble till now.

Recommendations are taken by voting. The committee has no working groups. It invites to the discussions the appropriate experts.

מדינת ישראל משרד הבריאות לשכת הבריאות המחוזית חיפה

State of Israel
Ministry of Health
Haifa District Health Office

دولة إسرائيل وزارَة ألصحة دائرَة ألصحة أللّو ائبة حَيفا

The committee meets in most cases with the initiative of the head or members of the

committee and of the Head of Public Health Services and the General Manager of the

Ministry of Health.

Data are presented by the Department of Epidemiology of the Ministry of Health and the

appropriate invited experts.

The committee considers the recommendations of other English speaking NITAG's mainly

CDC, ECDC, Health Canada and that of the UK and WHO recommendations and evaluates

their applicability according to the Israeli data and health infrastructure. Although cost-

effectiveness, cost-benefit and cost-utility considerations (Israeli or from other countries) are

included when available, the committee may put emphasis on being the Western State which

means that its vaccination program must be similar to that of most of them. The committee

considers public health values especially equality.

The committee is highly respected by the Ministry and heads of the Health system. All the

recommendations of the committee were adopted by the Ministry, but their application, which

till 1995 took 1-2 years, may take since then 1-6 years because of budgetary issues.

A suggested reform

The committee considered the April 2010 Supplement of VACCINE which dealt with NITAG's

and decided to consider in the near future the following changes in the nomination and

functions of the Committee:

1. Nomination of the committee will be by the General Manager of the Ministry of Health

instead of by the Head of Public Health Services.

2. The nomination will be for a term of 5 years with the possibility of adding another term.

3. The committee will include 12 core members; the ex officio members will not have

voting rights. Liaison members without voting rights will be added.

4. More detailed Terms of Reference will be adopted.

5. Guidelines on Conflict of Interests will be added.

6. Services of an economist, expert in cost-effectiveness analysis, will be available to the

committee.

Prof. Shmuel Rishpon, MD, MPH

Head of the Advisory Committee on Infectious Diseases and Immunization

The Israeli NITAG Dec 10.doc מיעצות בעולם\rule וועדות ולחיסונים\rule וועדה המיעצת למחלות זיהומיות ולחיסונים\rule וועדות מיעצות למחלות זיהומיות ולחיסונים וועדות מיעצות בעולם