

Iodine Prophylaxis

Partly in response to the WHO publication, and partly in response to other related issues that had been raised within the UK, the Department of Health (NRPB's funding Department) asked NRPB to set up a Working Group of external experts to advise on whether revisions should be made to the UK's plans for stable iodine prophylaxis in the event of a radiological emergency involving radio-iodine. This is the 2nd such Working Group (the 1st UK Working Group on Stable Iodine Prophylaxis published its recommendations in 1991).

The Terms of Reference of this 2nd UK Working Group are specified as follows:

'To consider whether, in the light of both the new draft WHO guidance and the experience gained after the Chernobyl reactor accident, revisions are required to the advice published by the UK working party in 1991. To consider whether NRPB's Emergency Reference Levels for stable iodine prophylaxis require amendment.

It is also proposed that the working party should look at the leaflet that accompanies the stable iodine tablets and, if appropriate, suggest revisions to the text.'

This 2nd UK Working Group held its first meeting under the Chairmanship of Professor Sheppard (Professor of Medicine and Head of Medicine Department at the University of Birmingham, Queen Elizabeth Hospital) in March 2000. A second meeting was held in June, and a third meeting is presently being arranged for the end of this year. The Group hopes to present its recommendations to the Department of Health in the first half of 2001.

NRPB is providing the Secretariat for this Working Group. For further information about its remit and findings to date, it is probably best to contact the Chairman, Professor Sheppard, directly on **m.c.sheppard@bham.ac.uk**.