

COMARE Work Programme

May 2026 – April 2027

Publications issued:

The association of cardiovascular disease with radiation exposure

A subcommittee of COMARE has reviewed evidence from epidemiological studies and biological studies of possible mechanisms, with a particular focus on low dose exposures, considering possible health implications for the UK population. With input from and the agreement of the Committee, the report was submitted to DHSC for approval and was published on 14th April 2026 as the 20th COMARE Report.

The impact of UV tanning devices in the UK

COMARE published its 13th report ([*The health effects and risks arising from exposure to ultraviolet radiation from artificial tanning devices*](#)) in 2009 in response to requests to provide advice regarding the safety of UV sunbeds in the UK. At the request of DHSC and the health departments of the Devolved Administrations, a subcommittee of COMARE has produced a short report reviewing scientific developments since 2009, assessing the level of implementation of the 13th Report recommendations across the UK, and identifying regulatory options and research requirements. With input from and the agreement of the Committee, the report was submitted to the four UK health departments and approved for publication in 2026 as the 21st Report.

Reports in progress:

The effects of light on human health

The report into the effects of light and noise pollution on human health by the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee made recommendations regarding the scientific evidence of health effects and public policy implications. With approval from DHSC, a subcommittee of COMARE will undertake a scientific review to determine what is known and what further information is required to provide evidence-based guidelines regarding the impact of artificial light on human health within the built environment.

Cancer risks from low doses of ionising radiation

A report on the risks of solid cancer following exposure to ionising radiation was published in 2011 by the Advisory Group on Ionising Radiation (AGIR) to the then Health Protection Agency, following a previous AGIR report on leukaemia and related malignancies. Since then, there has been substantial progress in both cancer epidemiology and radiobiology. With approval from DHSC, COMARE will undertake a scientific review of the evidence of cancer risks from ionising radiation focussing on exposures at low doses or low dose rates. The report will consider risks of radiation-induced cancer for the UK population and comment on implications for current UK protection policy and legislation.

Working Groups:

Contaminations

The Contaminations Working Group (CWG) will continue to consider updates on the beach monitoring programmes submitted from Dounreay and Sellafield, noting the particles detected at each site. The working group will also follow the monitoring work being undertaken at Dalgety Bay following the completion of the remediation programme. In addition, the CWG will continue to monitor information about the release of radioactive leachate from the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo (MSSS) at Sellafield and plans for its remediation.

Authorisations

COMARE has a standing commitment to advise on authorised discharges of radioactive materials as and when new or revised authorisations are produced. The Authorisations Working Group (AWG) will advise on draft authorisations and keep the Committee aware of its responses.

ICRP Recommendations

The International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) has embarked on the process of developing new recommendations, the outcomes of which may impact on radiological protection regarding workers, patients, members of the public and the environment. The ICRP Recommendations Working Group (IRWG) will respond to relevant consultations by the ICRP. The IRWG will advise COMARE on ICRP developments towards new recommendations, inform COMARE of associated health implications for the UK and also maintain awareness of responses being formulated by other international and national groups.

EMF and Health

COMARE continues to recognise the public health concerns regarding exposures to electromagnetic fields (EMF). The EMF and Health Working Group (EAHWG) will advise COMARE on health impacts and concerns associated with exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) in the UK. This will include reviewing available evidence on the UK public health impact of radiofrequency radiation, with consideration of both existing and new technologies, to determine if further review is warranted.

Updates received by COMARE:

UKHSA Updates

The Committee benefits from expert input from the UK Health Security Agency and will continue to receive updates in relation to possible health effects of EMFs and radon exposures and associated risks.