

Submission
No 4

INQUIRY INTO DENTAL SERVICES IN NSW

Organisation:

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Theme:

Summary

Inquiry into Dental Services NSW
The Director Standing Committee on Social Issues
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Sydney 2000

21 April 2005

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to make a submission on the Dental Services Inquiry regarding the matter of WATER FLUORIDATION.

1. Water fluoridation is promoted by the NSW Government, on the basis that fluoride is safe for all people and helps reduce tooth decay.

However it is well documented by authorities such as the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council and the World Health Organisation that fluoride is not safe to consume in high doses.

Because of this the NHMRC and WHO both recommend that fluoridating governments measure the daily fluoride intake by individuals from all sources such as food and medication before commencing new fluoridation schemes. These recommendations have been ignored by the NSW Government on financial grounds and their failure to comply with health precautions and failure to warn people of the dangers of fluoride ingestion would appear to put people at risk from unregulated fluoride overdose.

Due to personal experience, I believe that a small amount of fluoride in the diet does help to decrease dental decay. All I had to do was to change from using a non-fluoridated toothpaste to a fluoridated one. I do not need two or more sources of fluoride and it would be detrimental for me to have this. Also, we have no right to fluoridate the entire ecosystem and I have no wish to consume it again through eating deep-sea fish or sharks which are at the top of their food chain.

2. One of the symptoms of fluoride poisoning is dental fluorosis, which involves a weakening of the tooth structure and consequently leads to higher rates of tooth decay. Fluoridated places such as Sydney are experiencing rising rates of tooth decay (Sydney Morning Herald 15 February 2005). Some un-fluoridated areas such as the Mid North Coast NSW actually have lower rates of tooth decay than many fluoridated areas.

The NSW Department of Health do not appear to be monitoring rates of dental fluorosis nor warning people of the potential for overdosing their children with fluoride from tap-water and nor do they appear to have investigated any dental care alternatives to fluoridation.

3. The chemical most used in fluoridation schemes is Silicofluoride, which has never been tested for safe human consumption but has been shown to be associated with behavioural disorders in child ren and increased rates of social violence and crime. Silicofluoride is delivered to water supplies as an industrial grade product that contains contaminants such as Arsenic (a 'known carcinogen') and Lead (a 'probable carcinogen'). This is not healthy for human consumers and nor is it healthy for the wider biological environment.

4. Only about 1% of water is actually consumed while the balance goes to bathing washing and the garden. The installation of fluoridation equipment is estimated to cost about \$1million per water supply. That money is better spent on direct dental services rather than in the wasteful practice of fluoridation.

5. Officers of the NSW Department of Health and politicians of the NSW Government have declined to respond to community concerns about fluoridation and health safety. There appears to be a desire on the part of the Department of Health to gloss over community concerns and an unwillingness to admit that health and safety recommendations are not being followed. Despite this the Department of Health still advertise fluoridation as being 'safe' for the whole community. I believe that the Department should not be deceiving the community in this way and there should be a procedure through which government errors such as this can be properly exposed and aired.

Thank you for considering this submission as part of your Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Alison Kennedy and Peter Rodgers

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