Fluoridation rage gains momentum

Hundreds of millions of people around the world are currently benefiting from this public health measure, which for the past 60 years has saved many millions of teeth from decay, from fillings and from needing to be extracted.'

He added: 'The degree of human discomfort and pain that has been avoided is almost inconceivable.'

Commenting on the public consultation being run by South Central Strategic Health Authority (SCHA), Lord Hunt said: ‘Rightly, fluoridation is a matter of local decision following public consultation. My family and I are fortunate to live in Birmingham, where the water has been fluoridated for 45 years. From my personal experience, I would strongly commend fluoridation to the people of Southampton.’

Baroness Cumberlege claims that during more than 20 years of involvement in health issues she has seen ‘few public health measures as measurably successful as fluoridation’.

‘The proposal was backed by Southampton City councillors – 26 votes to 18 – that fluoride be added to water in some areas of Southampton and South West Hampshire, in a move that will affect 195,000 people.

Andrew Mortimore, public health director at Southampton City Primary Care Trust, said: ‘We hope that local people take confidence from the decision taken by the city council to back the proposals. We hope also that even more Southampton residents will now express their support for the proposals for fluoridation currently being consulted on by South Central Strategic Health Authority.’

He added: ‘We are delighted by the fact that elected councillors who represent Southampton, which makes up the majority of those who would benefit from fluoridated water in the proposed scheme, have decided to support water fluoridation. We appreciate the thoroughness with which the issues were examined and believe this is an example of local democracy at its best.’

S
outhampton City councillors are backing fluoride fluoridation.
Scottish dental access crisis

MSPs are calling on the Scottish Health Secretary to deal with the lack of NHS dentists in Scotland.

Orkney, Grampian and Caithness have the lowest level of NHS dental cover, according to MSPs.

Orkney MSP Liam McArthur claims that the situation on the islands had reached crisis level.

Fluoridation range gains momentum

She pointed to reports by the Royal College of Physicians in 1976, the University of York in 2000, the US Task Force on Community Preventive Services in 2002 and the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council in 2007 that found evidence that fluoridation reduces tooth decay.

She added: 'Importantly, children in fluoridated areas have fewer fillings and extractions and are less likely to need a general anaesthetic for decayed teeth to be removed. Equally important is the fact that they experience less pain, discomfort and anxiety.'

Commenting on concerns posed by anti-fluoride campaigners over the safety of water fluoridation, Lord Hunt said: 'When the debate about whether or not to fluoridate Birmingham’s water was taking place in the early 1960s, there were dire predictions from anti-fluoridation campaigners that people would be seriously harmed, that teeth would turn brown and that no teeth would be saved from decay.'

However, he claimed none of these ‘scare stories’ actually came to pass in reality.

The public consultation, on whether to add fluoride to water in parts of Southamption and South West Hampshire, will close on Friday 19 December.

Dental Tribune moves ‘leaps and bounds’

Dental professionals from small practices are choosing to read Dental Tribune, over any other dental publication according to a recent survey by the British Dental Trade Association (BDTA).

The Dentist Readership Survey by the BDTA, found that a total of 66 per cent of DT readers choose where they practice as either NHS or private dentists. However the dentist who had decided not to set up a practice in the market that have been around for years.

The survey found that BDJ and BD&A News are the dental publications that attract the highest number of readers.

A total of 96 per cent of dental professionals believe that dental publications enable them to keep abreast of what is happening in the dental industry. While 77 per cent read dental publications to gain information on the newest techniques.

This makes DT, the second preferred choice for people in this age group.

Penny Palmer, editor of DTUK said: ‘We have only been in the market for two years and are already moving leaps and bounds compared to other stalwarts in the market that have been around for years.’

The message we’re putting out there is that we’re keeping everyone and anyone. We are getting patients in all of the time,’ said.

While Dr Ash Quraishi, principal dentist and clinical adviser at West Mount dental practice, is saying: ‘the more the merrier’.

The practice has three dentists and a hygienist and five nurses.

The practice is open six days a week and some evenings.

Empty rooms ‘a crying shame’

A primary care trust in Cornwall has been paying rent for nearly three years for two “expensively equipped” NHS dentist rooms that are empty and unused.

When Clays Area Health Centre opened in January 2006, it included provision for an NHS dentist. However the dentist who had planned to use the facilities decided not to set up a practice in the surgery.

The practice manager at the health centre, Judith Kurth called it a ‘crying shame’ that the PCT is paying for these rooms and no one is using them.

Orkney MSP Liam McArthur has revealed that the company has been forced to pull out.

A spokesperson for the PCT, said it was ‘clearly disappointed’ that the company had withdrawn and that staff were doing ‘everything possible to help affected patients.

He added: ‘As soon as NHS West Kent became aware of this potential issue we took steps to alleviate the inconvenience that this will cause.

The PCT has temporarily awarded contracts to a range of local dentists in the short term to ensure patients have access to treatment while the formal tendering process is completed.

That process will now begin again next month and the PCT hopes a successful bidder will be selected by June next year. 