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Fluoride bill positive but Government could go further

December 7, 2016 [Justice](#) Comments Off on Fluoride bill positive but Government could go further

Press Release – Water New Zealand

Water New Zealand says the Government's new bill giving District Health Boards the responsibility of managing the fluoridation of local public water supplies is a good move but the legislation could go further. Fluoride bill positive but Government could go further

7 December 2016

Water New Zealand says the Government's new bill giving District Health Boards the responsibility of managing the fluoridation of local public water supplies is a good move but the legislation could go further.

Chief executive John Pfahler says fluoride is a public health issue and therefore district health boards, and not local councils, should make decisions around its inclusion in drinking water.

However, he says he would like to see national policy as well as funding for fluoride in public water supplies, rather than separate decisions by each district health board, as is currently proposed by the legislation.

"Fluoride offers significant benefits for dental health for the entire population but particularly for children and those who are most economically deprived. Therefore it makes sense that the decision to add fluoride to water should be made at a national level."

"The Government needs to have the confidence to stand up against the small but vocal minority who have been waging a campaign against fluoride at both local and national level."

A study presented at the Water New Zealand Annual Conference this year estimated that over a 20 year period, fluoridation in water saves \$1.4-billion from both reduced dental costs for adults as well as significant savings from the health budget for reduced dental care costs for children.

The report found that investment in fluoride saved \$9 for every dollar invested.

"Fluoride has proven to be safe, effective and economical, yet only 56 percent of people on public water supplies receive fluoridated water.

"I look forward to seeing the legislation proceed through Parliament."

ends

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