

Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee Meeting 03-2014

Date & time: 20 May 2014, 10:30 am

Item	Key discussion points	Actions
1. Public water supply fluoridation – Implementation and management		
1.1. Kempsey SC	Kempsey SC requested a variation to the sampling arrangements for daily fluoride (Form 4) testing, at the South West Rocks water treatment plant.	NSW Health to notify Kempsey SC that the variation was approved.
1.2. Rous Water	Project is progressing. Tenders have been called for construction of Rous Water fluoridation plants. Tenders have closed for the Ballina – Marom Creek fluoridation plant.	
1.3. Port Macquarie-Hastings C	Fluoride levels in Port Macquarie reticulation have reached around 0.6 mg/L after operating since January 2012. Fluoridated water is diluted in storage dam.	NSW Health to prepare a draft letter to Port Macquarie-Hastings C asking for an update on how it aims to increase fluoride concentrations in Port Macquarie.
1.4. Coonamble SC	Coonamble SC has constructed a new water treatment plant, including a fluoridation plant. Fluoridation has not yet commenced due to issues with the water treatment plant. Council has two other sodium fluoride saturator plants that are surplus to requirements.	
1.5. Goulburn SC	Goulburn SC has procured a new fluoridation plant as part of a major water treatment	NSW Health to consider whether a subsidy should be provided for the fluoridation

Item	Key discussion points	Actions
	plant upgrade. Council has subsequently applied to NSW Health for a subsidy.	plant. NSW Health to revise the current capital subsidy guidelines to clarify subsidies for plant replacements and upgrades.
1.6. Upper Lachlan SC	Council has constructed a new water treatment plant at Gunning, incorporating a fluoridation plant. NSW Office of Water to inspect plant for commissioning in coming months.	
1.7. Glen Innes – Severn SC	Glen Innes-Severn SC has temporarily ceased fluoridating due to concerns about the age of the fluoridation plant. Council has requested in-principle support for a subsidy to replace the plant.	NSW Health to consider the request from Council and respond.
2. Public water supply fluoridation – expanding fluoridation coverage		
2.1. Status of unfluoridated LGAs	The committee noted a map and list of NSW Water utilities, showing fluoridation status.	
2.2. Fish River (State Water) – Lithgow Villages	City of Lithgow C has notified State Water that it wishes for water supplied to Lithgow Villages to be fluoridated. State Water will provide an update in the coming months.	
2.3. Narrandera SC	Drinking water in Narrandera has naturally occurring fluoride at levels around 0.7 mg/L. Graham Craig noted that fluoride may have positive dental health benefits in conjunction with other minerals.	NSW Health to research efficacy of fluoride in conjunction with other trace elements. NSW Health to investigate levels of fluoride in drinking water in Narrandera.

Item	Key discussion points	Actions
2.4. Narromine SC	Some drinking water systems in Narromine have naturally occurring fluoride. Levels vary between systems.	As for 2.3
2.5. Narrabri SC	Drinking water in Narrabri has naturally occurring fluoride at levels around 0.55 mg/L. Levels vary between source bores.	As for 2.3
2.6. Boorowa SC	NSW Health has previously conducted information sessions on fluoridation for Boorowa SC. Council has notified NSW Health that few people in the Shire drink reticulated water due to high hardness and salinity. Council will formally advise NSW Health after conducting a community survey.	
2.7. Oberon SC	NSW Health, with support from Oberon SC, conducted community forums in recent months to consider introducing fluoridation. Council will formally consider fluoridation and notify NSW Health of the response.	
2.8. Upper Hunter SC	NSW Health gave a presentation to an Upper Hunter SC council meeting. Council will carry out community consultation about fluoridating the water supplies of Scone, Aberdeen, Merriwa, Murrurundi and Cassilis.	
2.9. Gunnedah SC	NSW Health gave a presentation to a Gunnedah SC council meeting. Council staff are preparing a report for the Councillors on fluoridation.	
2.10. Murrumbidgee SC	NSW Health gave a presentation to a	

Item	Key discussion points	Actions
	Murrumbidgee SC council meeting. Council operate the Darlington Point system, which provides untreated drinking water. Council will contact NSW Office of Water about options for water treatment.	
2.11. Liverpool Plains SC	Liverpool Plains SC has formally notified NSW Health that it has considered fluoridation and decided not to pursue. Council are considering constructing a water treatment plant in future, and will reconsider fluoridation at this time.	
3. NSW Health update		
3.1. NSW fluoridation statistics	NSW Health presented a summary of statistics for NSW fluoridation plants.	
4. NSW Office of Water update		
4.1. Form 1 approvals	None	
4.2. Commissioning of new plants	Berrigan and Finley (Berrigan SC) and Gunning (Upper Lachlan SC) due for inspection in the coming months.	
5. General business		
5.1. Correspondence	NSW Health presented correspondence to the Secretary from Lachlan Shire Council and Cabonne Shire Council.	
5.2. Fluoride portfolio responsibility	NSW Health Water Unit has taken over administrative responsibility for the fluoridation portfolio. Centre for Oral Health Strategy to retain the role of consulting with Councils to advocate introducing fluoridation in unfluoridated areas.	Committee to note that correspondence and other inquiries should be directed to the Water Unit.
5.3. Budget	In September 2013, the	

Item	Key discussion points	Actions
	Minister announced additional funding of \$7.5M for increasing access to water fluoridation in NSW.	
5.4. Code of Practice review	NSW Health is revising the <i>NSW Code of Practice for Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies</i> to address recent legal challenges.	
5.5. FPWSAC Committee renewal	The current FPWSAC committee expires on 30 June 2014.	NSW Health to request the nominating agencies to provide nominations. Current committee members to notify NSW Health if they are willing to continue as members of the committee. NSW Health to coordinate the renewal of the committee.
5.6. TAFE course	TAFE OTEN currently runs the Fluoridation operator training course. Numbers for recent courses have been low, resulting in money losses for TAFE. There is a possibility of refresher training for the operators who have completed a course prior to 2002.	NSW Health and NSW Office of Water to assist TAFE where possible to increase awareness of the course.
5.7. NHMRC review	NSW Health is supporting the NH&MRC to complete an update of the systematic review of the safety and efficacy and fluoridation. Rous Water raised the issue of having a target fluoride concentration of 0.7 mg/L.	NSW Health to request that NH&MRC consider appropriate target fluoride concentrations as part of the review.
5.8. Fluoridation Act	A letter raised concerns about the current method of approvals, which can leave Councillors personally open to criticism when considering a decision to fluoridate.	

Item	Key discussion points	Actions
6. Other business		
6.1. Plant inspections	NSW Health will engage contractors to inspect fluoride plants throughout NSW and comment on their operation and condition.	
6.2. Research project	NSW Health will engage ARCPOH to develop a research project to gather contemporary evidence on the efficacy of water fluoridation in NSW.	

Meeting closed at 12:45.