

Auckland Council
Hutt City Council
Local Government New Zealand

10th October 2014

**Non-Profit Public Health
Education & Advocacy**

**Fluoride Free New Zealand, Partner:
Worldwide Alliance to End
Fluoridation**

Fluoride affects the whole body

Dear Mayors, Councillors, and Stakeholders,

Re: Critique of *Health effects of water fluoridation – A review of the scientific evidence*

International Critique of the NZ Report

As public concern and doubts grow in the few remaining fluoridating countries, it is vital that the political forces preserving fluoridation in New Zealand are required to provide thorough scientific and medical discourse and political transparency.

The same week that Israel outlawed fluoridation for its population of 8 million people, the New Zealand government published a document designed to dismiss growing concerns about fluoridation. Unfortunately, this review has failed to provide the balanced, objective and detailed study of the science that the groups that funded this report expected and are entitled to receive.

Fluoride Free New Zealand will provide a detailed international scientific and medical peer-reviewed critique of the new report this month. This advance briefing letter is supplied to present context and encourage open discourse. If any stakeholders have specific concerns or questions we invite them to contact us. We are able to raise those questions with the Worldwide Alliance to End Fluoridation peer review scientists directly.

As the email correspondence below shows, the report's primary objective was an attempt to pacify valid concerns by providing a superficial and speedy report on the fluoridation issue. There was no attempt to review the primary research on risks and harm. It provides no useful or new information to the New Zealand public or local councils interested in the truth of the matter and the welfare of the community.

Background

Earlier this year, Auckland Council referred the matter of fluoridation to the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Prof Peter Gluckman. Council was asking for advice, as some councillors had become concerned about fluoridation after attending a presentation by Prof Paul Connett.

Prof Gluckman contacted Prof Skegg, head of the Royal New Zealand Society.

Following an Official Information Act request, Fluoride Free New Zealand has been provided with email correspondence between Professors Gluckman and Skegg. These emails show that their review was carried out with minimal effort, time and resources. The emails state their agenda and confirm the limitations: to allay the concerns of the councillors; that the panel was handpicked, presumably with this agenda in mind; and that the scientific evidence of harm was not studied as it was considered too “vast and complex.” Moreover, the report was not a scientific review, but a collection of the opinions of the hand-picked pro-fluoridation panel, who then “reviewed” their own opinions.

In an email from Prof Skegg to Prof Gluckman on 9th of February this year, Prof Skegg said:

“I agree that the anti-fluoridation campaign is gathering momentum, and local authorities are in a difficult position. How would you like to proceed? The quickest response would be for you and me to issue a joint statement, which could be at least in part an amalgam of our joint statements.

Alternatively, the Royal Society could appoint a panel to review the evidence – the usual approach for academics such as ours – but that would take several months to come to fruition. Would that create more uncertainty, or would the fact that it is occurring give local authorities some much needed breathing space?”

Prof Gluckman replied:

“My bias is that we must address Auckland city properly. My thoughts are a combined response between my officer and RSNZ may be more powerful and stop people trying to dissect out differences.”

Prof Skegg to Professor Gluckman on 5th April:

*“As you will see below, however xx is questioning the feasibility of our approach. As you know I have always had concerns that – whereas the benefits of fluoridation can be summarised succinctly – **the literature on potential risks is vast and quite complex**. I can understand why any reputable scientist would be reluctant to put their name to a report if they have not had the time to have a first-hand look...Do you envisage that we could present our report as a synthesis of reviews by reputable evidence-based groups in other countries? Otherwise I think it may take a lot longer gestation”.*

On the 10th April Prof Gluckman said to Prof Skegg:

“There is an urgency and a reality – the fluoridation is hot and Auckland will be the next where the issue is played out.”

Please see attached a comparison of reviews that have been carried out by other government organisations which highlight the complete inadequacy of the NZ Review. Also attached is the emails received under Official Information Act.

Members of the Worldwide Alliance to End Fluoridation voluntarily provide extensive professional medical, scientific and statistical research and information about fluoride and water fluoridation.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any queries.

Sincerely,

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