

23 SEP 2015

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Dear

Request for Official Information for toxicological data on hydrofluorosilicic acid (H201503083)

Thank you for your email of 26 August 2015 to the Minister of Health, Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman, requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on the use of hydrofluorosilicic acid (HFA) in community water fluoridation. Specifically you have requested:

- the actual source of the safety information about HFA
- whether the Ministry of Health/the Government has ever done a standard test/Randomised Control Trial (RCT) demonstrating the effectiveness of swallowing HFA.

Your request has been transferred to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) for response under section 14(b)(ii) of the Act.

The Ministry's position on community water fluoridation is determined by a body of evidence rather than a single document or documents. This includes international evidence, scientific evidence and reviews, and by the position of international bodies such as the World Health Organization.

One source you may wish to consider is the August 2014 report '*Health effects of water fluoridation: A review of the scientific evidence*', published on behalf of the Royal Society of New Zealand and the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor (the Report), which comprehensively reviewed the scientific evidence for and against the efficacy and safety of community water fluoridation. Pages 22–24 of the Report refer to sources on the safety of fluorine-containing compounds, including HFA.

The Report found that there are no significant adverse effects of community water fluoridation within the range of concentrations currently recommended by the Ministry and used in New Zealand, and provides compelling evidence of dental health benefits for New Zealanders.

The Report is available on the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor's website (www.pmcsa.org.nz). It can be found by clicking on the 'Resources' link and then on the 'Publications' link.

Government agencies in New Zealand have not conducted a standard test or RCT demonstrating the effectiveness of swallowing HFA. There are large populations throughout the world consuming fluoridated drinking-water and there is clear evidence of the health benefits and safety of community water fluoridation. There is no need for an RCT of water fluoridation to be conducted in New Zealand.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C O'Malley'.

Cathy O'Malley
Deputy Director-General
Sector Capability and Implementation