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24 November 2023

J Bruning

By email: fyi-request-24587-07251ef0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: H2023032680

Tēnā koe Mr Bruning

Partial response to your request for official information

Thank you for your two requests under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 30 October 2023 for information relating to community water fluoridation. Please find a response to each part of your requests below.

Please supply information relating to financial information sent to the Ministry of Health from these councils:

Whangārei District Council

Western Bay of Plenty District Council

Waitaki District Council

Waipa District Council

Tauranga City Council

Taranaki District Council

Rotorua Lakes Council

New Plymouth District Council

Nelson City Council

Kawerau District Council

Horowhenua District Council

Hastings District Council

Far North District

Auckland Council

All responses to the original request prior to July 2022. (as described in letters such as this one, sent to Rotorua Lakes District Council.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/dg-direction-letter-rotorua.pdf>)

Information relating to this part of your request is publicly available on Manatū Hauora website at:

www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/binder_of_fluoridation_information_redacted_v5.pdf.

Further responses concerning amendments to budgeted costs of fluoridation of water supplies (this includes revisions to any of the earlier information) that have been sent to the Ministry of Health, up to October 30, 2023.

Manatū Hauora has identified a number of documents to be within scope of this part of your request. However, Manatū Hauora has decided to extend the period of time available to respond to this part of your request under section 15A of the Act, as consultations necessary to make a decision are such that a proper response to this part of your request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit. You can expect copies of the remaining documents on or before 22 December 2023

Please supply total funding directed to support local drinking water suppliers fluoridate local water, and details of which councils received a particular funding injection.

- 2021/2022

- 2022/2023

Current proposed budget for 2023/2024 by council and in total.

There was no funding made to any of the local authorities for the 2021/22 financial year. As for the 2022/23 financial year, Manatū Hauora paid \$135,000 to the New Plymouth District Council.

The budget for capital costs for fluoridating community water supplies is \$24 million over a 10-year period to the 2026/27 financial year. Please note, the total budget is not divided by local authority. Manatū Hauora is currently working with local authorities as they develop their funding proposals.

It is unclear from appropriations budgets how financial costs for fluoridation are categorised. Please show/advise how financial ledgers categorise Ministry costs for fluoridation.

Water Fluoridation appropriation financial costs are categorised as Departmental Expenditure under the Public Health and Population Health Leadership category of the Stewardship of the New Zealand Health System multi category appropriation. As for specific account code categorisation, Manatū Hauora classes the disbursement of these costs as 'outsourced services'. The local authority that receives this funding would make their own categorisations across personnel, operating costs etc as needed. Manatū Hauora does not keep a record of this.

It is understood that fluoridation does not completely prevent caries but that there may be an uncertain marginal benefit to the DMFT (HNZ00030962). Please advise the budgeted costs savings to treatment of dental caries for the public health sector from this initiative in the 0-7 (or - 0-10) age group.

Information within scope of this part of your request is publicly available on Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/publication/review-benefits-and-costs-water-fluoridation-new-zealand.

Please forward all advice and analysis sent to the Director General and/or the Minister of Health reviewing or discussing any draft version of the NTP Monograph on the State of the Science Concerning Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopmental and Cognitive Health Effects: A Systematic Review. US National Toxicology Program - from March 2021 onwards.

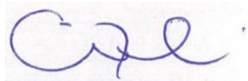
This part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist. It is important to note that the Office of the Chief Science Advisor considered an earlier version of the draft National Toxicology Programme report as part of a review of evidence on community water fluoridation. A copy of this report can be found at: www.pmcsa.ac.nz/topics/fluoridation-an-update-on-evidence/. Commentary on the draft National Toxicology Programme report is on page 25.

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: oiagr@health.govt.nz.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Clare Possenniskie
Acting Group Manager, Public Health Policy & Regulation
Public Health Agency | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui