

# **A JOINT STATEMENT ON WATER FLUORIDATION BY THE CONSULTANTS IN DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH & CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE DENTAL OFFICERS AND THE DIRECTORS OF DENTISTRY IN SCOTLAND**



The Consultants in Dental Public Health group and the Directors of Dentistry in Scotland are very supportive of the recent statement on water fluoridation by the four UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs). Water fluoridation is a cost-effective, evidence-based preventive measure for reducing tooth decay in children and adults.

Tooth decay is a largely preventable disease with considerable impact on individual health and wellbeing, the NHS and society as a whole. It is associated with significant inequalities, with, for example, 5 year old children from the most deprived areas in Scotland suffering the greatest burden of disease. Recent evidence shows dental disease levels among children in deprived communities are halved along with associated savings in treatment costs where there is a water fluoridation scheme.

Fluoridation of the water supplies would be an important additional dental public health intervention, for tackling the health inequalities associated with tooth decay.

It is important to stress that water fluoridation would not be a replacement for other national and local oral health improvement programmes (such as the world leading Childsmile programme).

The Consultants in Dental Public Health group and the Directors of Dentistry in Scotland welcome this significant development and wish to emphasise that the establishment of water fluoridation schemes requires prolonged wide ranging engagement with the public and other stakeholders. In addition there is a need for concerted political and strategic leadership both at local and national levels and we pledge our support and expertise to facilitate the process in Scotland.

**02 November 2021.**