

## **Community Water Fluoridation - Comparisons with other countries**

### **How many countries have Community Water Fluoridation...?**

Countries with fluoridation schemes include the United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, England, Ireland, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea.

Major cities around the world with fluoridation schemes include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Boston, Miami, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, Santiago, Birmingham, Newcastle upon Tyne, Coventry, Dublin, Cork, Seville, Bilbao, Hong Kong, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Auckland and Wellington.

Over the past ten years there has been an increase in fluoridation coverage around the world, particularly in the United States, Brazil, Chile, Australia and Malaysia, adding around 50 million people who receive this public health measure.

### **Germany, Denmark and the UK enjoy the lowest dental decay in the EU, however only the UK partly fluoridates...?.**

Because their public water systems are both older and of smaller scale than those in the US, many European countries (e.g. Germany, France, Spain and Switzerland) find it more cost-effective to provide the cavity-fighting benefits of fluoridation by adding it to table salt (much the way iodine is added to salt in the US to prevent goitre).

### **Don't many countries show marked improvements in dental health with or without fluoridation...?**

The UK has improved dental health despite only 11 per cent of its population having community water fluoridation. This is true for many developed countries where it reflects improvements in education, oral health, use of fluoride toothpastes etc.

In undeveloped countries the situation is not as good. Additionally, the country level picture is very different to data at a local level when associated with deprivation. So, to make proper comparisons you have to consider the naturally occurring levels of fluoride within countries and also the oral health inequalities within populations and not at country level.

The case for fluoridation is based on local dental health needs and rates of decay. Within England there is considerable variation between areas and local analysis has shown Hull to have poor dental health. Therefore fluoridation is being considered as an option, as recommended by Public Health England, as part of an overall Oral Health Action Plan.

Please note, this document will be updated as and when we receive more feedback on this particular topic.