

19 JUL 2016

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Connie Winslow
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Ref: H201602533

Dear Connie Winslow

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request of 21 June 2016 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) requesting a response to the following questions:

*What is the per person cost of water fluoridation in NZ?
Who pays for this? Is it the local DHB or the town ratepayer?
Does cost of it alter with the size of the town?
What are the ongoing costs as to operate, test, maintain equipment, replace pipes, etc?
Will there be fluoride free sites for people to get a fluoride free supply of drinking water, not from plastic bottles sold in stores?
What will be available for people on home dialysis to filter out the fluoride?*

The information you request in the first four questions, about the cost of fluoridation, is already in the public domain. You may like to refer specifically to the Sapere Research Group's report *Review of the benefits and costs of water fluoridation in New Zealand*. This report is available on the Ministry of Health's website at www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/fluoridation/proposed-legislative-changes-decision-making-fluoridation-drinking-water-supplies

As you may be aware, in April 2016, Health Minister Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman and Associate Health Minister Hon Peter Dunne announced proposed legislative changes to allow district health boards (DHBs), rather than local authorities, to decide on which community water supplies are fluoridated in their areas. More information on what is proposed can be found on the Ministry of Health website at the link above.

Whether un-fluoridated drinking water will be available in fluoridated areas (and vice versa) will remain a local decision just as it is currently.

In relation to your question about home dialysis, filtration of water for use in renal dialysis machines, including those used in the home, includes the removal of fluoride and other chemicals.

You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review my response to your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joy Cooper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Joy Cooper
Acting Director
Service Commissioning