

Question on Notice
No. 109
Asked on 14 February 2008

MRS MILLER asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

What are the benefits of fluoridation of water and how will it benefit the community's dental health?

ANSWER:

The most recent Child Dental Health Survey found that children aged 5-15 years living in fluoridated areas had less decayed, missing and filled teeth than those from areas without fluoridated water.

The Survey also found that water fluoridation was associated with better dental health, regardless of whether children lived in the least or most socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

The continual protection of fluoridated water is one of the reasons it is much more effective at reducing tooth decay than fluoride tablets or drops.

The benefits of water fluoridation are realised within a short time period. Evidence of improvements in oral health could be shown within five years of implementation.

People of all ages benefit from water fluoridation, particularly older people who are keeping their teeth longer.

The large scale review of the impact of water fluoridation in 2000, found that an average of 2.25 less teeth would be decayed. That is 225 less decayed teeth in a population of 100 children.

For each \$1 invested in water fluoridation, the estimated saving for an individual is \$12.60-\$80.00, with the greatest benefit to the most disadvantaged (Australian Council of Social Services, 2006).