



Cynulliad National  
Cenedlaethol Assembly for  
Cymru Wales

## **The Petitions Committee**

### **Completion Report**

**Summary of the Petitions Committee's consideration of P-03-104  
Against Fluoridation**

**October 2008**

**E-Petition Received**

16 April 2008

**Ruled Admissible**

21 May 2008 (following collection of signatures)

**Initial Consideration****11 June 2008**

The Committee gave initial consideration to the petition, and agreed to write to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the Welsh Assembly Government's position on the fluoridation of the public water supply.

(See Annex 1 for the relevant extract from the transcript of the meeting on 11 June 2008, and Annex 2 for the letter sent by the Chair to the Minister for Health and Social Services)

**Further Consideration****16 October 2008**

The Committee considered a response from the Minister for Health and Social Services, and agreed to close the petition as they felt unable to progress it any further.

(See Annex 1 for the relevant extract from the transcript of the meeting on 16 October 2008, and Annex 2 for the response received from the Minister for Health and Social Services)

**Petitions Clerk**  
**October 2008**

## Annex 1

## Extracts from Petitions Committee meetings

### 11 June 2008

**Val Lloyd:** We have four new petitions. The first is a petition against fluoridation. It was an e-petition, submitted by Mr John Warman from Neath, calling on the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government to stop the fluoridation of public water supplies. I will open that up to discussion.

**Andrew R.T. Davies:** It is a contentious issue, but one would like to think that one could be open-minded in order to gather more evidence on this. I suggest that we get a more governmental view on it in the first instance, so that we can see what is happening on the official side of things. I suggest that we write to the relevant Minister to get a bit of background on where we stand and then we could consider inviting the petitioner to give evidence if that were the agreed course of action.

**Val Lloyd:** That sounds like the right approach. Kirsty, do you have any comments on this?

**Kirsty Williams:** I agree with Andrew. I am not aware that the Government intends to introduce a policy of fluoridation, so a letter explaining the Government's position could be the quickest way of establishing whether it intends to do so.

**Val Lloyd:** I agree; that is the sound way forward. So, we will write to the Minister to ask for the Assembly Government's position and we will take it from there

### 16 October 2008

**Val Lloyd:** The next petition is P-03-104 Against Fluoridation. We have a letter from the Minister included in our pack, in which it is categorically stated that there are no plans to introduce a fluoridation scheme in Wales.

**Michael German:** It says that there are no 'current plans'.

**Val Lloyd:** I know, but it is always put that way, 'no current plans', as the Minister cannot speak for any future Ministers. I think that it is quite categorical that this Minister is not thinking of introducing fluoridisation.

**Michael German:** In the letter that we send to the petitioner informing him that we have closed it, we can say that the petition has achieved the objectives and he can always submit a new petition should the Minister change her mind or a future Minister decide to introduce such a scheme.

**Val Lloyd:** No problem; I am sure that the petitioner would know that, but we can certainly reinforce the point.

## Annex 2

## Y Pwyllgor Deisebau

### Petitions Committee

Edwina Hart AM  
Minister for Health and Social  
Services  
Welsh Assembly Government  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

Our ref: PET-03-104

25 June 2008

Dear Edwina,

#### **PETITION: Fluoridation of public water supplies**

This petition was considered for the first time by the Petitions Committee on 11 June 2008. The petition calls upon the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government to stop the fluoridation of public water supplies in Wales.

The Committee was not aware of any Assembly Government policy to introduce fluoridation, but resolved to ask you to clarify the Assembly Government's position in relation to fluoridation of public water supplies.

I should be grateful if you could consider this request and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

**Val Lloyd,**  
**Chair, Petitions Committee**

Enc. Petition wording

**Edwina Hart AM MBE**  
Y Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services

Our ref: EH/04656/08  
Your ref: PET-03-104

Val Lloyd AM  
Chair  
Petitions Committee  
National Assembly For Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

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Caerdydd CF99 1NA  
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E-Bost: Correspondence.Edwina.Hart@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

8<sup>th</sup> October 2008

Thank you for your letter of 25 June (which I received on 30 September) regarding the petition to stop the fluoridation of public water supplies in Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government has no current plans to introduce fluoridation schemes in Wales. Any such proposal to introduce fluoridation would be subject to wide public consultation and we are sensitive to the fact that there is a certain amount of opposition in Wales to the fluoridation of water supplies.

On 14 March I launched a National Oral Health Action Plan to help tackle oral health inequalities in Wales. Central to the Plan is a Child Oral Health Improvement Programme which is being delivered through a strengthened public dentistry role for the Community Dental Service. The programme "Designed to Smile" has two main parts: a supervised tooth-brushing scheme, using fluoride toothpaste, for 3 to 5 year olds, and a promotional programme for 6 to 11 year olds. In the longer term we will look to develop a third component, promoting oral health from birth.

The objective of the "Designed to Smile" Programme is to target young children in areas of greatest need and will build on the foundation of the current Fissure Sealant Programme. It will initially be rolled out in two 'super pilot' areas and cover the North Wales region and a substantial part of South Wales. It is anticipated that the first phase of the programme will commence in October 2008.