

GDC consultation response

**Department of Health and Social Care
consultation, Water fluoridation: seeking views
on future consultation process**

Dated: 3 June 2022

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General Dental Council response to the Department of Health and Social Care consultation, Water fluoridation: seeking views on future consultation process

The General Dental Council (GDC) is the UK regulator of dental professionals. Our primary purpose is to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to [respond to the consultation](#). As part of our core objective of public protection, we support broader system efforts to increase dental access, improve oral health and reduce oral health inequalities. We are aware of evidence which shows that water fluoridation, at levels recommended in the UK, can safely and effectively reduce tooth decay and oral health inequalities.

We are also aware of the positive potential impact of population-level oral health improvement on dental professionals and the care they provide. This impact may be particularly beneficial in the context of pandemic recovery and alleviating some of the dental access and service capacity challenges faced by both the public and dental teams.

Do you agree or disagree that any future consultation should continue to be limited to individuals living in areas directly affected by any future water fluoridation proposals and bodies with an interest?

- **Agree**
- **Disagree**
- **Don't know**

Please explain your answer.

Agree. In principle, we agree that any future consultation should continue to be limited to individuals living in areas directly affected by any future water fluoridation proposals and bodies with an interest. However, this does depend on the definition of 'bodies with an interest', and we would request further clarity on this. It is important that bodies with an interest include dental professional organisations and other stakeholders from across the dental system as appropriate, including national bodies such as the GDC.

This approach would enable the views of those directly affected, or with an interest, to be heard and represented proportionately, whether they support water fluoridation or not. It may also allow for consultation responses to better reflect the local population's circumstances and health needs.

Should consultation responses be considered from individuals living in areas not directly affected by, or bodies without an interest in, any future water fluoridation proposals?

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Don't know**

Please explain your answer.

No. In principle, we do not think that consultation responses should be considered from individuals living in areas not directly affected by, or bodies without an interest in, any future water fluoridation proposals. However, we would again request clarity on which bodies are considered to have an interest.

We would want to prevent individuals not directly affected, or bodies without an interest, disproportionately or unfairly influencing consultation outcomes by masking the views of others.

3 June 2022