

**NOM - Cancel Fluoride to Protect Public Health- amended 25 November 2024**  
**Cr H Halkyard-Harawira** seconded by **Cr Babe Kapa**

**I wish to lodge the following Notice of Motion** on behalf of concerned people in our district. That Council cancel the fluoridation of Far North waters until local residents on town water supply agree to do so. The Notice of Motion is based on the following reasons:

- 1) **The government has commanded a poll on Māori wards** in order to be more “democratic” , but has not seen fit to accept a similar local poll on a contentious issue with residents who will be impacted by fluoride in their town water supply . Council should be guided by the outcome of a poll by affected residents on the use of fluoride in their water supply.
- 2) **A statutory duty to protect public health . *The Health Act - Section 23 states that it is “the duty of every local authority to improve, promote and protect public health within its district.”***

Fluoride has been labelled a neurotoxin and comprises lead, arsenic and mercury . The ingestion of fluoride can cause fluorosis and impacts on the thyroid. It is also found in rat poison . **Section 23 c** suggests fluoride as a substance is likely to be injurious to health or offensive , and therefore fluoride should be removed.

Hence, the council is legally required to take steps to protect the public health by declining to implement the Directors-General’s directive.

One role of the Council is to provide reliable infrastructure for good drinking water. Our focus is to improve water quality, provide safe ultra violet filtration and to support Resilience measures for areas who suffer drought, water shortages and hot weather blooms. There is no guarantee that Council will avoid liability for any long term health side-effects of fluoridated water.

- 3) **Expensive, unsubsidised and prone to liability**, the proposed cost in the new annual plan to fluoridate Kaikohe and Kaitaia supplies in 2025 is \$2.4million. There is no guarantee yet of central government funding nor subsidy. Council has been advised there is a \$200,000 daily penalty if we do not comply. If we do comply, we could in the future be held responsible for causing great long term harm to residents. Following orders will not suffice in a court case.
- 4) **Lack of consultation** with Far North recipients in the proposed fluoride scheme. In 2010, 56% of Kaitaia residents and 67% of Kaikohe locals voted against fluoride. Only residents who will be ingesting the proposed fluoridated town supply should be consulted about whether they approve of fluoride in their water.

- 5) **Equity in dental health care-** Fluoridation of water is not an equitable way to deliver better health care to young Māori and the wider population. There is a view that fluoridation is a magic wand and will reduce young Māori tooth decay by 50% in areas like the Far North. The Council and other agencies could put in place incentives to attract dentists and dental staff to our area.
- 6) **An education approach** the lack of access to dental care in the Far North is dismal. There are three month waiting lists for adults. Mobile dental clinics can take up to two years to do return visits to kura. An educational approach targeting Kohanga Reo, ECE and schools could be more cost effective . A Kaitaia Trust had a Tooth Fairy visit all the local Kohanga and ECE to give free toothbrushes and paste to show small tamariki how to brush and the importance of regular brushing. Socialisation of high teeth decay in Māori children must go hand in hand with improved access to dental care.
- 7) **Sugar is the enemy of whānau Māori and low income whānau** . FNDC could work in collaboration with Health organisations, dieticians and Kura Hauora by imposing a bylaw to ban high sugar drinks and food products in local shops and events . Sugar is a killer of Māori and is responsible for high diabetes, obesity, teeth decay and early morbidity. Lack of income also impacts on whānau choices in purchasing kai. It is cheaper to buy a soda drink than a 2 litre bottle of milk.
- 8) **High deprivation- lack of access to health services and dental care** . The Ministry of Health and tertiary providers could offer more incentives for dentists, oral hygienists, mobile dental trucks and nurses to be located in the Far North areas of the Hokianga, Kaikohe and Kaitaia.

**Kia ora ra**

**H Halkyard-Harawira and Babe Kapa**