

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Yan to the Minister for Health:

Oral Health

- 1. What work has been done regarding extending water fluoridation in the Northern Territory? Has any modelling been undertaken?**

Community water fluoridation involves the whole of Government. NT Health has led, in collaboration with the Power Water Corporation, analysis of a 10 year collection of oral health and water quality data.

NT Health continues to undertake studies to analyse and build the evidence base of the cost-benefit and impact of water fluoridation on tooth decay in remote and very remote NT children.

Findings will inform updates to the longstanding NT Health water fluoridation policy.

- 2. Are there any plans to expand water fluoridation in the Northern Territory, and what is the associated budget?**

The remote communities with fluoridated water supplies, installed fluoridation infrastructure through community development grants available at the time.

Potential options to discuss future bilateral negotiations have been explored through officer-level discussion with the Australian Department of Health.

The national Dental Funding Reform group, consisting of dental and intergovernmental leads from all states and territories, is preparing advice on sustainable dental health funding, tasked by the Health Ministers Meeting in April 2022. Population-based methods of reducing disease are being explored in relation to funding options via this forum.

- 3. Has needs mapping of oral health been undertaken for remote and regional areas?**

This piece of work is currently underway as it is related to the above studies.