December 4, 2007

Mayor Fred Eisenberger,
City Hall – 1st Floor, 71 Main Street West,
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

RE: Water Fluoridation in Hamilton

I am writing on behalf of the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD), an organization committed to ensuring optimal oral health for all. We recently learned that Hamilton City Council is considering the cessation of municipal fluoridation. The OAPHD is extremely concerned about this possible eventuality. Our concerns are the domino effect this may have on other fluoridated communities and also the impact this action would have on the oral health of Hamiltonians, most especially for the 20% living below the poverty line.

The reduction in dental decay over the last few decades is due to the widespread exposure to fluoride. Despite this overall reduction, however, the poor and deprived experience a disproportionate share of the disease. Water fluoridation has been and still remains the most cost effective and practical method for delivering fluoride. It also reduces the disparities in the burden of oral disease. Any alternate method of fluoride delivery requires the allocation of substantially more public and private resources. Many studies have demonstrated that community water fluoridation not only reduces the overall prevalence and severity of decay, but it also reduces the disparities in the burden of the disease.

The provincial government recently committed $45 million to assist the working poor in obtaining dental care. The OAPHD is concerned that this positive step toward poverty reduction may be counterbalanced by actions taken in Hamilton. It would be incongruous for one of the model fifteen Vibrant Communities in Canada to take actions that would increase the negative health effects of poverty.

Attached is the OAPHD policy statement on fluoridation for your consideration.

Yours for better oral health,

G. Robert Bowes DDS MPH
Immediate Past President OAPHD

cc The Hamilton Spectator
POLICY STATEMENT ON
WATER FLUORIDATION

March, 2006
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I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD) supports the fluoridation of municipal drinking water. It recommends water fluoridation as a safe, effective and economical public health measure to prevent dental caries in all age groups.

II. METHODOLOGY

An internet search was conducted for water fluoridation and fluorides policy and position statements from four organizations that represent the closest professional affiliation with the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry. They are the Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry, the Canadian Dental Association, the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario and the Ontario Dental Association. All policy and position statements were made between 2002 and 2005.

III. BACKGROUND

The Canadian Association of Public Dentistry website under the heading Fluoridation of Community Water Systems cites eight respected professional organizations throughout the world that support water fluoridation. The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) website under the heading Use of Fluorides in Caries Prevention supports fluoridation of municipal drinking water at levels required for efficacy by the Federal-Provincial Subcommittee on Drinking Water. The policy statement of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons on Ontario under the heading Water Fluoridation supports the fluoridation of drinking water as an important approach to oral health promotion and
disease prevention. The Ontario Dental Association under the heading Community Water Fluoridation Hits 60th Anniversary adopts the Canadian Dental Association position in support of water fluoridation.

IV. REFERENCES


V. OAPHD PERMISSION STATEMENT

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