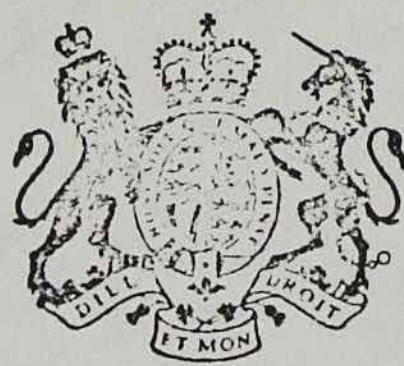


Original in ~~Files~~ National Health

C.F.  
To note



cc DASS

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 December 1979

Dear Mr Peyton

I am sorry that you have had to wait so long for a reply to your letter of 17 October enclosing one from Mrs J P Pitman of Priory Farm, Charlton Mackrell, Somerton about the fluoridation of water supplies. I was concerned to get the fullest information myself about a number of current issues affecting the question of fluoridation.

This is a difficult issue, and I am well aware of the divided views about it, and of the strength of view of those who feel that fluoridation is a form of compulsory medication and that, as such, it is wrong. I can assure Mrs Pitman that the Government has no intention at present of changing the law for the purpose of giving stronger powers to water authorities to fluoridate water supplies.

I am in no doubt about the value of fluoride as a protection against dental decay. Gerry Vaughan knows the importance I attach to looking at ways, other than fluoridation, of promoting preventive measures which will contribute to dental health. At the same time, I recognise that successive Governments have accepted that fluoridation of drinking water is a valuable preventive measure which many studies have shown to be both effective and safe. This view has been supported by the Royal College of Physicians after a comprehens

/review

review of the scientific publications on fluoridation. Contrary views continue to be expressed, and Mrs Pitman may be assured that all properly documented evidence will continue to be thoroughly examined and evaluated. A full statement about fluoridation policy was given by the Government Spokesman, Lord Cullen of Ashbourne, in his reply to the House of Lords debate on 15 November.

signed

MT

The Right Honourable John Peyton, M.P.