

Publication Summary



Dental Statistics – HEAT Target: Fluoride varnishing for 3- and 4-year-olds

First release (data as at 31st March 2012)

Publication date – 27th November 2012

About this Release

This release provides information, as part of the [Childsmile](#) programme designed to improve the dental health of children in Scotland, on the [application of fluoride varnish to children's teeth](#). The recorded clinical activity is also being monitored under the Scottish Government's [HEAT target](#) (at least 60% of 3- and 4-year-old children in each SIMD quintile to receive at least two applications of fluoride varnish per year by March 2014). These figures cover fluoride varnish applications carried out in nurseries, schools and dental practices and are consolidated across the different settings using data linkage.

Key Points

- The data presented here for each NHS board are the number of 3- or 4-year-old children resident in that NHS board area who received two or more applications of fluoride varnish in the previous year, the estimated population of 3- or 4-year-old children, and hence the proportion of the population receiving two or more applications of fluoride varnish, by deprivation quintile. This first release covers the period 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012.
- There is extensive variation in these reported quintile scores between NHS boards, but generally more deprived SIMD quintiles are attaining higher scores than the less deprived quintiles.
- ISD reports this data quarterly on the HEAT dashboard, and based on trajectories made by each NHS board these figures are expected to increase – across quintiles – towards the March 2014 end-point (of this HEAT target's clinical activity), as *Childsmile* activity increases. For example, it is only since October 2011 that dentists have been remunerated under the terms of NHS general dental services for providing *Childsmile* fluoride varnishing.

Background

Childsmile is a national programme designed to improve the oral health of children in Scotland and to reduce inequalities in dental health and access to dental services.

The [Nursery, School](#) and [Practice](#) elements of the *Childsmile* programme include the application of fluoride varnish among the services provided. Fluoride varnishing is shown to be effective in reducing tooth decay in children when used in combination with brushing teeth regularly with fluoride toothpaste. In the *Childsmile* Nursery and School programme, dental teams work in educational establishments focusing on children living in the most deprived local quintile as defined by [SIMD](#). Fluoride varnish can also be applied in dental practices, and dentists are remunerated for providing this service to children.

These HEAT target Official Statistics releases will be published annually until 2014. The database managed by ISD records the number of 3- and 4-year olds in each SIMD quintile of an NHS board who have received fluoride varnish applications. Performance “scores” are given as the number of children treated two or more times divided by the total population of 3- and four-year-olds.

The data presented in this report for each NHS board are the level (percentage) of population who received at least two applications of fluoride varnish in each deprivation quintile of 3- or 4-year-old children resident in that NHS board area in the previous year. The Scottish Government’s [HEAT target](#) is for “at least 60% of 3- and 4-year-old children in each SIMD quintile to receive at least two applications of fluoride varnish per year by March 2014”. This first release covers the period 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#)

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