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

About ISD
Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.
Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHSScotland - and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

Official Statistics
Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.
Further information on ISD’s statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the ISD website.