

Publication Summary



Dental Statistics – HEAT Target H9: Fluoride varnishing for 3 and 4 year olds

(Data as at 31 March 2014)

Publication date – 27 January 2015

About this Release

This release reports the progress of Fluoride Varnishing (FV) applications to children's teeth, one of the interventions developed as part of the *Childsmile* programme. The publication covers the financial years 2012/13 and 2013/14 to enable comparisons to be made.

The recorded clinical FV application activity has been monitored since April 2010 under the Scottish Government's HEAT target (at least 60% of three and four year old children in each deprivation quintile to receive at least two applications of FV per year by March 2014).

The target covered FV applications carried out in nurseries, schools and dental practices. Data from each of these settings were consolidated across the different settings using data linkage so that each child is only counted once, within the time period of interest.

Key Points

- Two NHS Boards (NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Shetland) met the H9 HEAT target of 60% of children aged three years old and those aged four years old receiving two or more FV treatments in 2013/14 for all quintiles of deprivation.
- There has been an increase in the number of children receiving FV treatment across Scotland, and within each of the NHS Boards.
- The data shows a clear deprivation gradient within Scotland and in the majority of the NHS Boards, with children in the most deprived quintiles most likely to receive FV.
- Nationally the total number of 3 year old children receiving two or more FV treatments has increased from 12,192 in 2012/13 to 19,320 in 2013/14.
- Nationally the total number of 4 year old children receiving two or more FV treatments has increased from 13,068 in 2012/13 to 21,235 in 2013/14.

Background

[Childsmile](#) is a national child oral health improvement programme in Scotland aiming to reduce inequalities in dental health and in access to dental services. The [Nursery, School](#) and [Practice](#) elements of the *Childsmile* programme include the application of fluoride varnish among the services provided. FV 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 disadvantaged areas, generally the most deprived quintiles as defined by [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#). FV can also be applied in NHS dental practices, and dentists are remunerated for providing this service to children.

In August 2014, the Scottish Government requested that FV reporting for the HEAT target reflect the non-population weighted 2012 SIMD measure in order to align with reporting of other Scottish Government HEAT targets. As a result, the non-population weighted 2012 SIMD categorisation was used to analyse FV figures for the final reporting of the HEAT target and uploaded to the HEAT dashboard. Note: this change only affected the final HEAT dashboard reporting for 31 March 2014, covering the period 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014. The data reported previously, up to and including December 2013 had been reported using the population weighted 2012 SIMD methodology.

Data for both 2012/13 and 2013/14 have been calculated under both SIMD methodologies for the purpose of this publication.

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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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