

Publication Summary



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

(Data as at 31st March 2013)

Publication date – 26th November 2013

About this Release

This release provides information on the [application of Fluoride Varnish \(FV\) 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 FV per year by March 2014). These figures cover FV 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 Scotland and for the NHS boards are the numbers and percentages of 3- and 4-year-old children resident in that NHS board area who received two or more applications of FV in the previous year, along with the estimated populations of 3- and 4-year-old children, by deprivation quintile for the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013.
- Nationally the total number of children receiving two or more FV treatments has increased from 8,873 3-year olds and 11,016 4-year olds in 2011/12 to 12,192 3-year olds and 13,068 4-year olds in 2012/13, an increase in the number of children of 37.4% and 18.6% respectively.
- The national percentage of 3 and 4 year olds receiving two or more FV treatments was 20.2% and 22.5% respectively, but there was much higher use of FV for children living more deprived SIMD quintiles than for children living in the less deprived quintiles.
- There was extensive variation between the NHS boards, but again children living in the more deprived SIMD quintiles had higher use of FV treatments.
- ISD reports these 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.

Background

[Childsmile](#) is a national programme designed to improve the oral health of children in Scotland and 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. Fluoride varnishing (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 the most deprived local quintile as defined by [SIMD](#). FV can also be applied in NHS 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.

This release provides information on the [application of FV 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 FV per year by March 2014). These figures cover FV applications carried out in nurseries, schools and dental practices and are consolidated across the different settings using data linkage.

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Further Information

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

About ISD

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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](#).