

# Irish Medical News Columnist/Doctor Sues State for Medicating without Consent

Fluoride Action Network

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Irish Examiner

September 20, 2001

## GP alleging violation of rights to sue State over fluoridation

By Fionnuala Quinlan

A GP is suing the State for continuing to fluoridate drinking water, claiming it constitutes a breach of his human rights.

Kildare-based Dr Andrew Rynne said fluoride in Irish drinking water is recovered pollution from the [phosphate fertiliser industry](#) and contains arsenic and lead.

"They harvest it from the pollution 'scrubbers' in their chimney stacks. It has, in fact, no proven efficacy and its toxicity is not fully understood," he said.

Under Irish law, medicine is only permitted to be administered without consent to those who are mentally ill or by direction of a court or a guardian where the patient is a junior.

"And yet here I am every day of my life being medicated without my consent. This is as clear a violation of my human rights as false imprisonment.

"We the citizens of this State are human subjects involved in a medical experiment or clinical trial in an effort to prove or to disprove the theory an arsenic-containing pollutant prevents tooth-decay," he said.

The Irish Medicines Board, which is responsible for licensing medicinal products, is to be cited as a co-defendant in his case against the State.

"The IMB is in serious breach of its duty of care towards my health and towards the health of every citizen of this State by allowing an unlicensed and unproven medicine to be force-fed to all of us," Dr Rynne, a columnist with Irish Medical News writes in this month's issue.

Dr Rynne is part of a growing campaign against fluoridation. Already eight local authorities have asked the Government to be allowed to halt fluoridation in their area. However, they are forbidden to do so under the 1960 Health Act.

Ireland is now the only country in Europe to insist that drinking water be fluoridated, but Fine Gael has pledged to end fluoridation if they gain power after the next election. Some scientists maintain it is linked to cancer, irritable bowel syndrome, hip fractures and thyroid disorders, while a study published in the American medical journal NeuroToxicity found fluoride exposure could produce lower IQ levels in children.

Health Minister Micheal Martin set up a forum on fluoridation last year to investigate claims that fluoride in drinking water could be damaging to health.

The forum is due to report next month. A spokesman for the Minister said he could not comment until he saw the report.

[Read Dr. Andrew Rynne's latest column in the Irish Medical News - September 17, 2001](#)

## Other recent news

Northside Dublin News

September 10, 2001

### Fluoride faces water ban!

Fingal County Council has adopted a motion to pursue a policy to ban the compulsory addition of fluoride into the public water supply.

The motion was tabled by Cllr Heidi Bedell (GP). It will now be included in the council's Corporate Development Plan.

Cllr Bedell said it was a historic and highly significant shift in Fingal County Council policy.

"The Green Party has been campaigning on this controversial health issue for many years now to rid fluoride from the country's public water supplies," said Cllr Bedell. "Slowly but surely the municipal authorities across Ireland are deciding to back the Green Party's call for a ban on fluoride.

Cllr Bedell highlighted a recent study carried out in Canada. It found no evidence of any alleged quality of life advantage from fluoridation.

"This effectively undermines its credibility as a public health initiative," continued Cllr Bedell. "The Canadian study noted that where fluoridation has been discontinued, the rate of tooth decay did not increase to any significant degree."

A Canadian professor commenting on the findings said that there is no need to put fluoride in water because it is now present in various other sources.

"He said children are getting too much fluoride in communities where it is added to the water," remarked the Fingal councillor.

Cllr Bedell said that fluoridation has been rejected by almost all European countries except Ireland.

"Fingal County Council's adoption of the Green Party motion is indeed a healthy step along the road to getting rid of fluoride from our water supplies," concluded Cllr Bedell.

Irish Independent

June 30, 2001

### Tapping into fury over fluoride

by Gemma O'Doherty

As new fears over fluoride surface, GEMMA O'DOHERTY revisits the story that earned her last year's Campaigner of the Year award.

The chairman of Kildare County Council has never given a second thought to the amount of water he drinks. He takes the same amount a day as the average Irish person: a glass or two from the tap, a few mugs of tea, and a drop in the odd whiskey at night. He certainly never thought it might be doing him any harm. Until now.

Last Friday, Rainsfort Hendy received the results of a urine test he had done to measure the level of fluoride in his body. With seven other councillors from Kildare, he had agreed to take the test after a recent lecture to the council on water fluoridation by a British expert. The results found that six of them had fluoride levels high enough to cause medical concern. Chairman Hendy's sample showed one of the highest levels, 5.4 milligrams of fluoride, almost double the recommended safe level of 3mg a day.

"I was very surprised. I had never really thought about it before but from now on I will be watching my water intake as will the other councillors who took part. This is a national issue now. What we are really concerned about is the damage it could be doing to the whole population and that there is no choice but to take fluoride because it's in our water by law. We want this issue looked at urgently."

With a crippled health service to worry about, Minister for Health Michael Martin must privately hope the nagging issue of water fluoridation will go away, but pressure continues to mount on the Government to bring the controversial practice to an end.

A concerted countrywide campaign is now under way demanding a stop to the mass medication of the public with fluoride in the water supply. Eight local authorities - Dublin Corporation, Sligo, Donegal, Leitrim, Longford, Kildare, Clare and Kerry, have publicly stated their opposition to fluoridation or asked the Government that they be allowed decide for themselves if they want it in their area. Under the 1960 Health Act, they are prevented from doing this.

Opposition politicians are making similar requests. Earlier this year, Fine Gael announced its intention to end water fluoridation for good if the party comes to power at the next general election.

To add to the minister's grief, the Forum on Fluoridation which he set up in May 2000 to investigate claims of adverse health effects has been rubbished by the anti-fluoridation lobby who claim the bulk of its members are in favour of the practice. They fear it is a foregone conclusion, that when it concludes in September, the forum will recommend the continuation of fluoridation.

Today, Ireland stands alone in Europe as the only country to insist under law that drinking water contain fluoride. Seventy-three per cent of Irish drinking water contains the drug which is added to prevent dental decay. Most other countries have rejected the practice because it is considered ineffective and unsafe. Opponents of water fluoridation, which include most western governments and the largest union of scientists in the American Environmental Protection Agency, claim it is linked to cancer, irritable bowel syndrome, hip fractures and thyroid disorders.

Read rest of article at [http://www.unison.ie/irish\\_independent/stories.php3?ca=45&si=463386&issue\\_id=4764](http://www.unison.ie/irish_independent/stories.php3?ca=45&si=463386&issue_id=4764)

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*Longford Leader*

*July 13, 2001*

#### ***Nolan calls for immediate ban on water fluoridation***

Cllr Peggy Nolan wants an immediate ban on the fluoridation of drinking water in Ireland. She states that we shouldn't have to wait until the forum on fluoridation concludes in September.

"At present Ireland stands alone in Europe as the only country to insist under law that drinking water contains fluoride," she points out. "Seventy three per cent of Irish drinking water contains the drug, which is added to prevent dental decay. Most other countries have rejected the practice including most western governments and the largest Union of Scientists in the American Environmental Protection Agency claiming it is linked to cancer, irritable bowel syndrome, hip fractures and thyroid disorders. There is also a link to lower I.Q. levels in children. Studies on the blood levels of 150,000 children under seven found that those living in fluoridated areas were at greater risk of having lead in their blood higher than the acceptable level."

Although it is widely believed that the fluoride added to drinking water is a natural mineral, the agent used in Irish water is a highly corrosive acid, a waste component of the Dutch and Finnish Fertiliser industries, Cllr Nolan claims.

"It is very toxic and contains trace amounts of lead, arsenic, chromium and uranium. When this enters the body only some excretes and the rest is left to accumulate in bones, glands and other tissues.

"I am deeply concerned that this entire country is being medicated against their will. Under E.U. legislation everyone has a right to bodily integrity and what this government is doing is clearly unethical," the Fine Gael councillor continued.

"Bottle fed babies in Ireland are receiving unsafe levels of this drug in their feed. If we use the British Medical Association Safety limits, new born babies who eat formula made with tap water are receiving three times the safe dose of fluoride.

"The Department of Health is determined to proceed with its policy of water fluoridation. It is my belief that the policy should be "If in doubt, cut it out".

[http://www.unison.ie/longford\\_leader/stories.php3?ca=38&471089&issue\\_id=4845](http://www.unison.ie/longford_leader/stories.php3?ca=38&471089&issue_id=4845)

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*Irish Times*

*July 3, 2001*

#### ***Most submissions to forum are anti-fluoridation***

*By Alison Healy*

The majority of people who made submissions to the Forum on Water Fluoridation have objected to fluoride in the public water supply.

Health fears and the lack of choice in receiving fluoride were the main objections made in the 1,050 submissions. The forum was set up by Minister for Health, Mr Martin, last September to review the fluoridation of public water supplies. It will report to the Minister in October.

According to Dr Paddy Flanagan, chairman of the forum's sub-committee on public consultation, just 10 to 12 per cent of the submissions favoured the mass fluoridation of water.

"There were great concerns around areas such as osteoporosis, cancer and sclerosis. People mentioned about 14 different conditions that they, rightly or wrongly, attributed to fluoridation."

Dr Flanagan said every view would be carefully examined and the forum would then come to a decision on the validity of these views.

Some submissions expressed the fear that people would exceed recommended levels of fluoride if they followed health advice to drink eight glasses of water a day. Others had concerns about the accuracy and skill used in adding fluoride to the public water supply. The effect of fluoridated water on infants drinking formula was also raised.

In one submission, a woman pointed out that while the option to buy non-fluoridated water was available, she could not afford to buy bottled water.

While most people strongly objected to mass fluoridation, they were not as strongly opposed to alternatives such as fluoride tablets, fluoridated toothpaste and fluoridated salt, Dr Flanagan said.

However, several people objected to the difficulty in getting un-fluoridated toothpaste, particularly in rural areas.

Fluoride was first added to the public water supply in this State in the early 1960s, following research that showed tooth decay in young children was lower in areas where drinking water contained natural levels of fluoride, at around one milligram per litre.

<http://www.ireland.com/newspaper/ireland/2001/0703/hom1.htm>

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*Irish Independent*

*June 15, 2001*

### **Public bare teeth over fluoridation**

*by Treacy Hogan, Environmental Correspondent*

ANGRY members of the public marched on the Department of Health yesterday demanding an end to fluoridation of drinking water.

More than 100 [Fluoride Free Water](#) campaigners handed in scientific studies which link fluoridation with serious health impacts such as cancer and irritable bowel syndrome.

They also claim that the chemical used to fluoridate tap water contains toxic levels of arsenic, chromium, nickel, and mercury.

Spokesman Dr Don MacAuley said that data obtained under the Freedom of Information Act showed the Government was endangering the public's health by continuing the water treatment.

He said Ireland was one of the few countries where the water system is fluoridated on a mandatory basis.

Other European states such as Sweden, Holland and Denmark had banned the practice.

Dr MacAuley said: "We are calling on the Minister of Health to stop fluoridation immediately, carry out health checks as required by legislation, and begin an independent public inquiry into this mass medication."

The group said the official Forum on Fluoridation due to report to the minister later this year was nothing but a "paper tiger".

A Department of Health spokesman declined to comment on the issue while the forum is proceeding.

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*Irish Times*

*June 15, 2001*

### **Marchers demand ban on fluoride in water**

*By Laura Slattery*

A group concerned with the effects of fluoride in water has demanded the Government stop fluoridation immediately.

The Fluoride Free Water group marched to the Department of Health this afternoon and called on the Minister Mr Martin, to carry out health studies into the effects of fluoride in water.

They also want the Minister to begin an independent public inquiry into the mass medication, which they say is a breach of human rights. Dr Don Mac Auley, a dentist, delivered a protest letter addressed to the Minister.

International scientific studies have linked fluoride in water to hip fractures, cancer, irritable bowel syndrome, thyroid disorders and neurological damage.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 Dr Mac Auley discovered the agent being used to fluoridate Irish water is a highly corrosive acid and a waste product of the fertiliser industry, containing lead, chromium and arsenic.

Dr Mac Auley is concerned Ireland has not signed the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicines. Under Article 5 of this convention no one is allowed to be forced to take medication to which they have not given consent.

Dr Mac Auley told ireland.com the fluoridation forum set up by the Minister last May was inadequate and he claimed it was pro-fluoride. "We deserve better than that," he said.

Marchers held placards reading "Fluoride is More Toxic than Lead" and "Poison on Tap". Sister Rachel Hoey of Fluoride Free Water carried a bottle filled with thick brown liquid that took 60 days to collect from a tap with a filter.

"It's toxic filth," she said. "Babies just a few weeks old are given a formula that is made up with fluoridated water. It is steadily building up in our children."

Fluoride is added to 73 per cent of Irish water supplies and Sister Hoey is angry that the Minister has announced plans for more fluoridation plants to be built.

Mr Joseph Glynn, a researcher from Earthwatch, said it was "irresponsible" for the Government to medicate people without prescription and dismiss scientific evidence about the effects of fluoride.

"People are spending a lot of money buying bottled water to avoid this. They have justified fears about tap water but the Minister has not actually addressed the fears," Mr Glynn said.

"I see the damage in my surgery on a daily basis now," Dr Mac Auley said. "There was no fluoride in toothpaste when fluoridation first began in the 1960s but there is so much more now and it is not being monitored."

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*To learn more about the controversy over fluoridation in Ireland, see:*

\* **"Hard to Swallow" - Irish 20/20 Special Report on Fluoridation**

\* **Health fears rise over fluoride in water** *Irish Independent June 26, 2001*

\* **Probe into Baby Formula Fluoride Now Underway** *Irish Independent June 21, 2001*

\* **Truth Decay eroding confidence in fluoridation** *Medicine Weekly June 11, 2001*

\* **Kerry to Assess Health Risks of Fluoride** *Sunday Business Post May 20, 2001*

\* **Ireland Might Relax Fluoride Rules** *British Medical Journal June 10, 2000*

\* **Doctors Join Anti-Fluoride Campaign** *The Sligo Champion July 26, 2000*

\* **There's Something in the Water** *Irish Examiner May 31, 2000*

\* **Fluoride in our Water: Are We Brushing with Danger?** *The Independent (Ireland) , March 29, 2000*

\* **Fluoridation in Ireland: Some Background** *IFIN Bulletin #73 , March 25, 2000*

*Also, see:*

**Fluoride Free Water**

**VOICE (Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment)**