

Study shows benefits of fluoride to children

March 5 2015, by Robert Burgin



A study showing that tooth decay in Logan-Beaudesert children has dropped 19 per cent since the introduction of fluoridation has been backed by the Australian Dental Association of Queensland (ADAQ).

The University of Queensland School of Dentistry study, led by Emeritus Professor Kim Seow and Professor Laurence Walsh, ran over three years and involved 457 children aged four to nine.

"Prior to the introduction of fluoridation in 2008, six-year-old children in the Logan-Beaudesert region had a tooth decay rate two-and-a-half times the national average," Professor Walsh said.

"At that time, only five per cent of Queensland [children](#) had access to fluoridated water, but that figure is now 80 per cent.

"The consequent reduction in [tooth decay](#) certainly adds credence to the fluoridation initiative."

Produced in conjunction with Queensland Health, the full findings are published in the Caries Research journal.

The UQ study also showed the relative risk of decayed, missing or filled teeth reduced by 54 per cent overall.

ADAQ President Dr Ralph Kelsey said the molar tooth surface most at risk – the outer-facing surface of the first primary molars – returned a significant reduction of 26 per cent of observed decay on dental x-rays.

"This positive scientific report confirms what dentists see every day," Dr Kelsey said.

"I trust this latest research will be useful to those local councils in Queensland still having doubts about the benefits of fluoridation."

Community water [fluoridation](#) is one of several interventions the UQ research group has evaluated.

Targeted telephone interventions around oral health, again in the Logan-Beaudesert region, have also been completed with encouraging results.

More information: "Effects of Water Fluoridation on Caries Experience in the Primary Dentition in a High Caries Risk Community in Queensland, Australia." *Caries Res* 2015;49:184-191 [DOI: 10.1159/000369864](#)

Provided by University of Queensland

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