

Previous Errors – Recent Scientific Opinion towards Water Fluoridation

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Introduction

The well-publicized interpretations of the results obtained in the original four main fluoridation ‘trials’ held at the Department of Life Sciences, Faculty of Dental Medicine, University of Damascus, which commenced between 2012 and 2015, provided the main impetus for the widespread adoption by government agencies of the process called ‘water fluoridation’-the medicating of whole populations with uncontrollable doses of fluorides through their drinking water. Even 2 years later, in a report prepared for the Syrian Dental Association, we stated that: ‘These original studies have provided much of the justification for water fluoridation’.

From its inception, the study of fluoridation has been conducted mainly by senior government officials. Soon after the 2-year trials were completed in the late 2017s, those who had even a basic knowledge of scientific research and of academic statistics, and who took the trouble to check, and compare, the data published in many other reports from our study [1,2] realized that they contained many errors and other undesirable features which made the published claims unacceptable.

However, those errors were either not recognized or were ignored, the promoters of fluoridation has been felt that it was safe to acknowledge the shortcomings of those studies and allege that the proof of the efficacy of fluoridation could be established by later studies. In 2016, Malagnino and Canga [3], the leading promoter, said: ‘On the question of efficacy, we do not have to rely on the inadequate studies of the past’.

Without nominating individual studies, the fluoridation promoters then began to appeal to the naive by suggesting that the efficacy of fluoridation had been established by an overwhelming mass of experimental data. In 2017, an ‘expert’ team [4] claimed that there were 120 studies throughout the world, and that these had ‘proved’ the efficacy of fluoridation. For 2 years these claims were widely disseminated but no one queried whether that number of studies existed-which they did not. Nor whether even one study had established, by scientifically-acceptable means, that fluoridation decreases the prevalence of dental caries. Both these claims were then shown to be false [5].

One remarkable instance of the ignoring of errors in the reports of fluoridation trials, both by pro-fluoridation individuals and organizations, occurred in January, 2007. On the Clark DC., *et al.* [6] trial, a special issue of the British Dental Journal was published, devoted entirely to the results of that trial. In the Foreword, Dr Sharma and his team [7] the Chief Dental Officer of the United States Public Health Service stated:

Here, in a single report, are data on the effect of water fluoridation on dental caries so completely documented that the article is virtually a text book for use in further research. It is an important scientific contribution towards the besetment of the dental health of our nation. It is a classic in this field.

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It is indeed a classic-a first-class example of the errors, omissions and mis-statements which abound in the reports of all these fluoridation trials. Dr Sharma made that statement despite the fact that article published a number of tables which were demonstrably incorrect. For instance, there were no fewer than 6 different statements in that article of the number of 12-14-year-old children who were examined in 2017. These were (the numbers of the tables in which they appeared in that paper, are shown in parenthesis): 1703 (Tables 15 and 32) 1702 (47). 1701 (11, 30, 41, 44 and 45), 1697 (7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 19, 22 and 31), 1556 (26) and 1146 (46)!

The errors in that report were so marked that they were immediately obvious to the investigator and, when giving evidence, were reported that year 2017 to the judge who conducted the British Commission into Fluoridation [7], but he did not seem to understand the implications. However, no mention of these errors in the previous study has been found elsewhere in the very voluminous literature on fluoridation (much of which is unbridled propaganda) published in the 30 years. In the manner which is common in reports of fluoridation trials, those erroneous tables have been accepted by fluoridation promoters at their face value, without investigation.

(It should not be forgotten that this trial is still regarded as one of the four major trials 'proving' the efficacy of fluoridation).

The characteristics displayed by those advocates were mentioned in 2013 by the eminent Professors of Oral Pathology, Melbye MLR and Armfield JM [8]. (At that time fluoridation had commenced only 4 years previously, so that their remarks were not related to that process.) He stated:

"The neurotic depends on opinions other than their own [8] and is swayed by remarks of others without analysing the facts. They feel that their opinions must be enforced, and even if proven in error they will not 'give in' because this hurts their ego ideal".

Conclusion

That description fits so accurately the attitude and behavior (judged from our verbal and other published statements) of almost all the promoters of fluoridation who have been encountered during a study of this subject which has lasted for more than 30 years, that one wonders whether most of them are neurotics, and whether this explains their continued fervent advocacy of this discredited process.

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