Southampton resident fights fluoridation

**A** judicial review has been lodged by a woman in Southampton against the decision to add fluoride to tap water in Southampton and parts of Hampshire. Leigh Day & Co solicitors revealed that it has begun the legal challenge on behalf of Geraldine Milner against South Central Strategic Health Authority (SCSHA). A statement from Leigh Day & Co said: ‘Ms Milner is opposed to the proposals to fluoridate the water supply on account of the continuing uncertainties with regard to the long term health risks associated with fluoridation, as well as concerns with regard to the possible adverse environmental effects. She also considers that more targeted and less intrusive measures should be used to deal with problems of tooth decay in the Southampton area.’

The legal challenge argues that the SCSHA failed to have regard to the government’s policy that mass fluoridation of drinking water should only go ahead in any particular area if a majority of the local people are in favour of it. Leigh Day & Co claim in part of the Water Bill that became the Water Act in 2003, Lord Warner, the Junior Health Minister, stated in Parliament that it was government policy that ‘the new fluoridation scheme would go ahead with the support of the majority of the local populations determined by local consultations conducted by strategic health authorities.’

The South Central Strategic Health Authority (SCSHA) board’s decision was made in February despite 72 per cent of 10,000 respondents in a public consultation opposing the move. It also claims that much of the information on fluoridation submitted by bodies such as Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Against Fluoridation was never properly considered by the SCSHA board. The SCSHA said in a statement that the board is satisfied that, based on existing research, water fluoridation is a safe and effective way to tackle tooth decay and that the health benefits outweigh all other arguments against water fluoridation.

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