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Councillors firm on no water fluoridation

Sean Scanlon

Christchurch City councillors have sent a clear message to the Canterbury District Health Board that they will not fluoridate water supplies.

The board was told this year that young children with rotting teeth who required a filling or extraction under general anaesthetic were waiting 11 months for treatment, often suffering bouts of pain and in need of antibiotics.

School and community dental service clinical director Martin Lee has previously blamed the high level of decay among Canterbury children on the lack of fluoridated water.

During debate on a council submission to the board's strategic plan yesterday, councillors forcefully

rejected any suggestion of fluoridating Christchurch's water supply.

Cr Barry Corbett said he would not "touch fluoridation with a bargepole".

"It's about time we put this whole subject to rest. I don't think there is anybody here that's going to vote in favour of fluoridation," Corbett said. "Let's get logical for once and say it isn't going to happen."

Mayor Garry Moore said the council could work with the board to improve "oral health", but fluoridation did not have the support of Christchurch residents.

"It's a culturally unacceptable thing to do in Christchurch. We add absolutely no chemicals to our water," he said.