

## **Canada's additional actions taken to phase down dental amalgam and implement a third provision listed in Part II of Annex A of the Minamata Convention on Mercury**

Canada has already implemented two of the measures listed in Part II of Annex A: measure (i) *setting national objectives aiming at dental caries prevention and health promotion, thereby minimizing the need for dental restoration*, and measure (ix) *promoting the use of best environmental practices in dental facilities to reduce releases of mercury and mercury compounds to water and land*. Canada has implemented measure (i) through the implementation of the *Canadian Oral Health Framework 2013-2018* and the *Canadian Oral Health Strategy 2005-2010*. In addition, the Canadian Ministry of Health (Health Canada) implemented the community-based *Children's Oral Health Initiative for First Nations and Inuit*, which focussed on the prevention of dental disease and the promotion of good oral health practices among children, their parents/caregivers, and pregnant women. Together, the strategy, framework and initiative work to minimize the need for dental restorations by setting out our national objectives.

Canada implements measure (ix) through the *Notice Requiring the Preparation and Implementation of Pollution Prevention Plans in Respect of Mercury Releases from Dental Amalgam Waste*. This notice requires dental facilities to prepare and implement a pollution prevention plan if they have not already implemented best management practices for dental amalgam waste.

Following decision MC-3/2, Canada undertook a [review of the available safety information](#) for dental amalgam and concluded that there is no clear link between mercury in dental amalgam and negative health effects. Although pre-measured dental amalgam capsules are considered safe, bulk dental amalgam powders, which have to be mixed with liquid mercury by hand, are known to pose an unnecessary risk of mercury exposure for the dental healthcare professional.

In Canada, dental amalgam is considered to be a medical device under the *Medical Device Regulations* of the *Food and Drugs Act* and its sale for use is controlled through the issuance of medical device licences by Health Canada. At the time of the 2020 review, six dental amalgam products containing bulk metal powder were authorized for sale. However, these products were no longer being used in Canada. Following its safety review, Health Canada worked with manufacturers to discontinue the licenses of bulk dental amalgam powders. This action has allowed Canada to additionally implement a third measure listed in Part II of Annex A: measure (viii) *restricting the use of dental amalgam to its encapsulated form*.