

New Chair and Deputy Chair

During our annual election of Council members, we are pleased to announce that **Arthur Bauld** (formerly Deputy Chair) has been elected Chair of Council and **Michelle Lomax** as Deputy Chair. We would like to thank our outgoing Chair, Dr Jeff Harrison, for his continued commitment and ongoing support on the Council.

Vaccinations

Non-practising pharmacists - register your interest in Covid-19 vaccine roll-out.

The Ministry of Health is asking health professionals who are not practising, and able and willing to help, to register their interest in administering Covid-19 vaccines later this year. The Ministry wants to increase the vaccinator workforce to enable mass vaccination against Covid-19, whilst minimising disruption to existing health services.

The Ministry will pass your information to the District Health Boards (DHB) who will manage local needs. You will be employed and paid locally depending on the delivery options and funding arrangements chosen by the DHB.

Practising pharmacists - We anticipate more information will be available as the national rollout plans are finalised.

If you have completed vaccinator training or are willing to complete the necessary training, please register your interest by completing the online registration process; [COVID-19 Surge Workforce database](#).

For further information on the roll-out of Covid-19 vaccines including vaccinator training requirements, refer to the Immunisation Advisory Centre [website](#).

We understand it is currently envisaged mass vaccination is likely to be quarter 3 and it is then that additional Surge workforce is likely to be employed.

The Ministry requests that you please complete all questions, especially questions regarding ethnicity, Māori and Pacific health experience, and your ability and willingness to travel to other regions.

You can also complete the form if you want to support the vaccination programme in other ways.

APC Renewal

This is to remind you about getting ready to renew your annual practising certificate (APC). From 9:30am Monday 1 March 2021 you will be able to apply for your 2021-2022 APC through your [Pharmacy Council account](#).

In preparation for making your application we encourage you to consider the following:

- 1. Apply before midnight 31 March 2021 so you can continue to practise**
If your application is received after this time you will be asked to provide additional information, including an explanation of why you are making a late application. This lengthier process means you will not be able to practise until your new APC is issued.
- 2. Confirm you can log in to your account (see the FAQ link below) and update your contact details if necessary**
If you cannot recall your password, please click the link “Lost your password?” and follow the instructions to reset it.
- 3. Review your practising status**
If you are unsure if you require an annual practising certificate (APC) in your role, the Pharmacy Council has developed guides to help clarify whether you require an APC and to review [registration options](#).
- 4. Confirm that you have met your recertification requirements**
You will be asked whether you have at least 15 CPD points in your ENHANCE records for the 2020-2021 year. Please do not delay applying for your APC if you are still meeting the requirements but, in your application ensure you answer all questions honestly.
If you are changing your status to non-practising, we recommend that your CPD is up to date. If it is not up to date you may be required to fulfil additional requirements and/or you may experience delays if and when you wish to return to practice.
- 5. Payment details (see FAQs for more information)**
You should receive an automated email and receipt for your payment about 30 minutes after you submit your application. If you do not receive it within two hours, please contact us to ensure that your application has been received.
- 6. Practice setting(s) and work hours**
You will be asked to describe your pharmacist practice in line with the amendment to the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act in 2019. The Pharmacy Council is legally required to provide this information to the Ministry of Health, for the purposes of workforce planning (similar data is collected from all health professions). The Pharmacy Council also uses the information to monitor changes in the roles and distribution of pharmacists. The format for this is the same as last year and is based on Ministry of Health HPI facility codes. A list of HPI facility codes can be found on the [Ministry of Health](#) website.

Partially completed applications may be saved and later resumed; therefore, if you are unsure about any question please view the [FAQs](#) on our website or contact us (enquiries@pharmacycouncil.org.nz) rather than providing inaccurate information.

Pharmacy Team Relief Fund

There have now been two opportunities for community pharmacy teams to apply for relief from the Pharmacy Team Relief Fund, provided by the Ministry of Health and administered by the Council, since October 2020.

This email is to update you on the relief fund progress **and advise that applications for the third, and final, tranche of funding are now sought.**

Update on Tranches 1 and 2

Approximately \$0.9 million has been allocated to successful applicants to tranches one and two, and almost all of their pharmacy teams have received workload relief and had a break to rest and refresh.

The Fund continues to fulfil its original intention of helping community pharmacy teams that meet such criteria as: working in a community pharmacy; providing services to Māori and/or Pacific peoples; possibly working as a sole practitioner; and those in independent, or independent franchise-held pharmacies.

Applications for the Pharmacy Team Relief Fund Tranche 3

With the first two tranches now allocated, we are making the third, and final, tranche of approximately \$0.8 million available. If you did not apply under the first two tranches and believe your pharmacy team meet some or all of the criteria, please apply now for the third tranche.

Applications to Tranche 3 Funding can be made [here](#).

The process for tranche 3 applications will **close Sunday 21 March 2021**.

Please note:

- Once a pharmacy has a successful application, no further application for that pharmacy should be made.
- Applications will be prioritised according to criteria outlined in the [Pharmacy Team Relief Fund Policy and Process](#). An upper limit for pharmacist and technician hours for the third tranche is set to help ensure that as many pharmacy teams needing relief have the opportunity. The relief available for any one pharmacy license, is 5 days per 1.0 FTE pharmacist, and 5 days per 1.0 FTE technician regularly working in each pharmacy.
- When regular pharmacists or technicians are able to take a break due to a successful application to the Fund, they should not be required to use annual leave for their break. The Fund is for the benefit of pharmacy team members, rather than the business. The cost of locum or relief cover is paid for by the Fund, there should be no significant extra cost to the business.
- Council has taken action to separate the administration of the Fund and will not use the information provided by applicants for regulatory purposes. We will protect the privacy of the information we receive and use it only for the relief fund. We are confident this will allay any concerns in the sector about the Council's role in bringing relief to over-stretched community pharmacy teams.

Offers to provide Pharmacist or Technician Services

Some pharmacy teams are unable to source pharmacists or technicians who are available to provide relief. We need more pharmacists or technicians who are willing to be relievers, which may necessitate travelling to other parts of the country. Funding is made available to meet travel and accommodation costs. We are in greatest need for technicians, so if you have a technician (perhaps part time) and could 'lend' them to another pharmacy for a short time, or if you know a technician with work availability, we need their help urgently.

Any pharmacist or technician with work availability please click [here](#).

If this email does not apply to you, but you know of a pharmacist or technician who may be in need of relief, or could provide relief, please forward this email to them.

Recertification After April - Take your Time!

When you receive your 2021-22 APC in March, you will be ready to learn more about meeting new recertification requirements. We want to make this as simple as possible for you and assure you there is no need to rush it..

From late March, look out for emails from Council about the new requirements. **Please read these emails**; they contain simple instructions to start you off, step by step. Each email focuses on just one or two actions from April to June. But if you're keen, you can go as quickly as you like! After you receive an email link in early April which lets you access your 2021-22 online MyRecert portfolio, feel free to jump in and explore.

Here is the expected timeline of emails you can expect from the Pharmacy Council, along with what they'll cover:

- 30 March:** Familiarise yourself with new requirements for 2021-22, log on and explore the MyRecert online programme. We will tell you how to get help if you need it.
- 20 April :** Find a verifier and share your portfolio with them.
- 11 May:** Record a plan for professional development.
- 1 June:** Join a professional peer group. Schedule your first meeting
- 22 June:** A re-cap of what you should have completed by now and where to from here.