

26 October 2018

Pharmacists' APC fee set to rise 0.1%

Following the Pharmacy Council's review of the consultation submissions, it has decided pharmacists' Annual Practising Certificate (APC) fee will now marginally increase.

The Pharmacy Council consulted on a 1% overall fee increase in August, and received 114 submissions, of which 102 respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the proposed increase.

Chief Executive Michael Pead says the Pharmacy Council has listened to the feedback and has agreed to set the fee increase at only 0.1% which is a combination of a 2% increase (as opposed to the proposal of 3%) in the APC fee and a 12% decrease in the disciplinary levy.

"The proposed fee increase was due to an increased work load. However, after careful consideration we are confident it is manageable to keep the fee and the workload just above the existing level for another year. The reality is we do have to look at these fees on an annual basis and it is preferable to have small annual increases rather than irregular large increases."

He says the Pharmacy Council appreciates those who have taken the time to give their views and it is pleasing that practitioners are discussing the council's work programme and priorities. With more than 4,500 pharmacists, the Pharmacy Council would welcome feedback from a greater number.

"Our focus is very clear that, as the regulator, the Pharmacy Council works to protect the health and safety of the public through safe and effective pharmacy practice. We are committed to maintaining confidence in the profession in terms of safety, and at the same time contribute to the future of the profession through proactive and enabling regulation."

The Pharmacy Council has completed some preliminary consideration of the implications on whether other fee payment options for part-time pharmacists would be appropriate, he says. However, more consideration is required, and further work will be commissioned, which will then be discussed with the sector.

"We need more discussion around alternative fee payment options for part-time pharmacists, as we would need to be looking at cross subsidisation. It is important we hear the views of the sector before making any decision around this."

For the year beginning 1 April 2019, the APC fee will be set at \$793.62 including GST. This will be reviewed again next year.

[ends]

For more information please call Michael Pead. (04) 495 0330.