

10 November 2023

Media release

Council seeks feedback on proposed Disciplinary Levy and APC Fee increases

A consultation document explaining the Pharmacy Council's proposed Disciplinary levy and APC fee increases has been released today with submissions due no later than 9.00am Monday, 11 December 2023.

Council proposes an increase of \$50 to the Disciplinary levies and \$25 to the Annual Practising Certificate (APC) fees for the 2024/25 APC year. "We understand any increase will not be welcome, however the level of increases over the last five years and as a proportion of a pharmacist's total income is relatively small," says Pharmacy Council Chief Executive, Michael Pead.

Council has continued to meet demands to do more while absorbing the increased costs of its activities. Over the last five years the cumulative effect of inflation has been over 20 percent, however Council has adjusted its fees and levies by just over seven percent, even though its core activities, such as delivering disciplinary services, has become more complex and required extra resource.

In these tough financial times all organisations, including Council, are experiencing challenges to meet their costs. To assure effective and timely regulatory operations we propose to increase the Disciplinary levies and the APC fees, says Mr Pead.

The deficits Council has absorbed in previous years, and which it projects for the current financial year, has meant its reserves have been depleted below prudent levels and are much lower than almost all other similar health regulatory bodies.

Council is legally required to seek feedback on fee adjustments. Mr Pead said that Council would encourage pharmacists to consider the proposed increases while also recognising that it has a set of functions that it must undertake, as described under section 118 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003. These functions are to meet the overarching purpose of assuring the public that pharmacists are fit and competent to provide pharmacy services to the public.

Council will seek to meet with professional associations during the consultation period to further support understanding of the proposals and the reasons why Council has determined the need to propose increases in the Disciplinary levies and APC fees to meet its legal obligations.

The Council encourages pharmacists to share their views with their professional association(s) and if they wish, to make a written submission to Council.

Council will need to decide on the levies and fees proposals before Christmas for any adjustments to be gazetted and in place for the 2024/25 APC year, commencing 1 April 2024.

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