

APC fee and disciplinary levy communications series – number 1

Kia ora koutou

Today we are launching the first in our series of communications to raise understanding of Council's statutory role to protect public health and safety and the financial costs of fulfilling this role as the Responsible Authority for pharmacists in Aotearoa New Zealand's health system.

In the lead up to the APC fee and disciplinary levy consultation in late October, our series aims to keep you well informed of our work programme, the challenges we face in meeting our costs, and the rationale for our proposal.

The consultation document will set out Council's proposed new APC fee and disciplinary levy, which combined will be just over \$1,000. The increase of about 10 percent is in response to several factors, including: a rise in the number and complexity of notifications we are receiving regarding pharmacists' conduct and competence to practise, the need to replenish our general and disciplinary reserves, the government's programme of legislative review and general inflationary pressures.

We fully understand that any increase is not welcome, and that the workforce is under considerable pressure, however like all organisations in the current environment we need to cover rising costs to ensure that Council can continue to operate sustainably.

We are releasing communications which support our intent to consult, and our consultation document, earlier than in previous years to give the profession more time to evaluate the information we will be sharing on our role, work programme, and the proposed fee increase. We encourage you to engage with us and provide constructive feedback. While our role is mandated in legislation through the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA), there is some flexibility in how we can deliver our regulatory functions, and we are always open to hearing how we might do things differently.

Our communications series will cover a range of topics including:

- The HPCAA and our aligned work programme
- Our notifications and compliance function, responding to concerns about pharmacist conduct and/or competence and fitness to practise
- The significant increase in the number and complexity of notifications our compliance team is receiving, and therefore the rising costs Council is incurring in relation to these
- Our process and approach to notifications, including working with and supporting pharmacists who are subject to a notification to resolve issues together
- The impact of increased notifications on Council workload and costs
- Professional Conduct Committees and the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal, including their roles and the costs incurred when cases are referred to these bodies
- The annual budget process and how Council determines its proposed fee and levy
- Our general and disciplinary reserves policies and why we need to hold them

- Rising infrastructure costs e.g. Information Technology to ensure cyber security and privacy
- Top 10 FAQs – based on the questions we have been asked most in previous APC fee consultations.

We trust that you find our communications series insightful and informative, and we look forward to connecting with you on the APC fee consultation in the months ahead.

Ngā mihi nui

Michael A Pead
Chief Executive