

24 January 2025

Media release

New Pharmacy Council disciplinary levy and Annual Practising Certificate fee

The Pharmacy Council's disciplinary levy and Annual Practising Certificate (APC) fee will increase by a combined total of \$95 (including GST) for most practitioners and will take effect in the new recertification year beginning 1 April 2025.

The new combined fee will be \$1020 (including GST), which equates to a 1.6 percent rise to the APC fee (\$12) and a 55 percent rise to the disciplinary levy (\$83).

To provide the profession with greater certainty on fees for at least the next two recertification years, the total fee of \$1020 for the 2025/26 APC year will remain in place for the 2026/27 APC year.

Council understands that no increase will be welcome, but the organisation's primary responsibility is to ensure professional self-regulation is robust and sustainable to uphold public safety says Council CE Michael Pead.

"At the heart of what we do is being able to assure the public that pharmacists are practising competently and safely."

Michael says that New Zealand's model of self-regulation for individual health practitioners means that its work must be fully funded through the APC fee and disciplinary levy.

"The decision on the fee and levy is driven by the costs of delivering regulation rather than Council being able to set fees in proportion to the scale of pharmacist salaries and the pharmacy funding model," says Michael.

A significant part of Council's work is responding to notifications in relation to fitness to practise in the areas of competence, conduct and/or the health of a practitioner.

Michael says that the substantial rise to the disciplinary levy is to meet both the growing number and complexity of notifications, which have led to an increase in costs to meet all legal obligations.

This trend in rising notifications and cases is not confined to pharmacists, but across health professions.

Council's compliance team assesses inquiries and notifications, which is mainly funded through the APC fee, however cases referred to a PCC to investigate and which may lead to a PCC laying a charge with the HPDT, incur external costs that must be paid out of the disciplinary levy. While Council has previously used reserves in its Disciplinary Fund to cover increased costs, the limited reserve has been fully spent and needs to be replenished.

External costs charged by PCCs and the HPDT are out of Council's control, says Michael, and include legal costs, secretariat costs and the use of facilities and technology.

"The disciplinary levy enables us to deliver the professional discipline needed to protect the public and maintain the public's high trust and confidence in the profession."

Council will continue to work alongside the profession to refine its regulatory tools, including proactive tools such as recertification and accreditation, to support adherence to professional standards.

“Council thanks the pharmacists and professional associations for their feedback to our consultation, which helps to shape our regulatory tools and ensure they are responsive to changes in our pharmacy sector.”

Council has published a document summarising the reasons for its decision, as well as all consultation feedback and our responses, on Council’s [website](#).

[ends]