



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL  
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

# CONSULTATION: PRACTITIONER FEES REVIEW

THIS DOCUMENT SETS OUT PROPOSED  
CHANGES TO THE FEES PAYABLE BY  
PRACTITIONERS TO THE **MEDICAL SCIENCES**  
COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2018

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## Purpose of this Consultation

This consultation is set out in two parts:

1. In Section 1 the Council sets out its proposal to apply a general increase of 2% to all existing categories of practitioner fees, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019.
2. In Section 2 the Council sets out its proposal to introduce a new practitioner fee category that is an examination fee which may be used in some circumstances as a pathway to registration for overseas-trained practitioners. This fee would also come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019.

## Practitioner Fees in Context

The Council operates within the health regulation framework under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act). As a not-for-profit body the Council's operational revenue is derived from fees (such as registrations and annual practising certificates) and those fees are set in alignment with the Council's annual budgets. There is no general taxpayer contribution to any of its operations. Practitioner fees are set by the Medical Sciences Council under sections 130 and 131 of the Act.

The Council continually reviews its operations to ensure it provides best-value-for money and does this within the good practice guidelines of both the Office of the Auditor General and the Treasury. A conscious effort is made to minimise costs without compromising the Council's responsibilities in performing its functions under the Act. It is critical for the Council to be fiscally reliable so it can continue to meet its legislative responsibilities into the future.

## Proposed Fees Changes

Practitioner fees set by the Council have remained unchanged since 2016 despite a steady increases in operating costs over the last two years. The Council strives to make provision for extraordinary costs through the holding of a defined amount of contingency funds.

Due to CPI pressure and extraordinary expenditure related to the Kaikoura earthquake's impact on our premises, funds are now at a point where the Council requires to adjust its fees to sustain its financial position. Subsequently the Council is proposing to increase the various fees for practitioners so it can continue to meet its responsibilities in protecting the health and safety of the New Zealand public.

The following table provides a summary overview of the current fees set by the Council and the fees it is proposing to introduce.

## Section 1: General Fees Increase

The Council last reviewed practitioner fees in 2015 with a subsequent increase to all categories of fees commencing in February 2016. A central and recurrent theme of consultation feedback was a call for the Council to undertake more regular reviews of the fees schedule and for any future changes to be based on smaller incremental increases rather than sporadic reviews resulting in larger increases.

The Council has taken heed of this feedback and has instituted an annual review of its practitioner fees schedule. It was decided that no fee increase was required for the current (2018-2019) financial year.

A further annual review has been undertaken in respect for the upcoming financial year, 2019-2020, and the Council is proposing to increase all of the existing categories of practitioner fees by 2%. This increase aligns with general CPI increases over the last year.

The impact of a 2% increase on existing practitioner fees is set out below:

<b>Medical Laboratory Science Practitioners</b>				
Fee Category	Current Inc. GST	Current Exc. GST	Proposed Inc. GST	Proposed Exc. GST
<b>A. Registration Fees</b>				
Application for registration from a NZ-trained practitioner	\$350.00	\$304.34	\$357.00	\$310.42
Application for registration from an overseas-trained practitioner	\$550.00	\$478.26	\$561.00	\$487.82
Application to add a scope of practice	\$100.00	\$86.95	\$102.00	\$88.70
<b>B. Annual Practising Certificate (APC) Fees</b>				
Renewal of an APC received by 31 March	\$260.00	\$226.09	\$265.20	\$230.61
Renewal of an APC received after 7 April	\$364.00	\$316.52	\$371.28	\$322.85
Application for an initial APC received between 1 April to 30 September	\$260.00	\$226.09	\$265.20	\$230.61
Application for an initial APC received between 1 October to 31 January	\$130.00	\$113.04	\$132.60	\$115.30
Application for an initial APC received between 1 February to 31 March	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>C. Supply of Documents Fee</b>				
Issue of a certificate of registration (additional to initial confirmation of registration)	\$57.50	\$50.00	\$58.65	\$51.00
Any other document certifying registration status or standing	\$57.50	\$50.00	\$58.65	\$51.00

<b>Anaesthetic Technology Practitioners</b>				
Fee Category	Current Inc. GST	Current Exc. GST	Proposed Inc. GST	Proposed Exc. GST
<b>A. Registration Fees</b>				
Application for registration from a NZ-trained practitioner	\$350.00	\$304.34	\$357.00	\$310.42
Application for registration from an overseas-trained practitioner	\$550.00	\$478.26	\$561.00	\$487.82
<b>B. Annual Practising Certificate (APC) Fees</b>				
Renewal of an APC received by 31 March	\$345.00	\$300.00	\$351.90	\$306.00
Renewal of an APC received after 7 April	\$483.00	\$420.00	\$492.66	\$428.40
Application for an initial APC received between 1 April to 30 September	\$345.00	\$300.00	\$351.90	\$306.00
Application for an initial APC received between 1 October to 31 January	\$172.00	\$149.57	\$175.44	\$152.56
Application for an initial APC received between 1 February to 31 March	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>C. Work-Based Assessment Fee</b>				
Sit a work-based assessment for the purpose of registration and/or issue of an APC	\$3,700.00	\$3,217.39	\$3,774.00	\$3,281.74
<b>D. Supply of Documents Fee</b>				
Issue of a certificate of registration (additional to initial confirmation of registration)	\$57.50	\$50.00	\$58.65	\$51.00
Issue of a replacement and/or duplicate annual practising certificate	\$57.50	\$50.00	\$58.65	\$51.00
Any other document certifying registration status or standing	\$57.50	\$50.00	\$58.65	\$51.00

## Section 2: Examination Fee



The Council is introducing an examination as a pathway to registration for overseas-trained practitioners and expects this will be in place by mid-2019.

In this consultation document we are seeking feedback from the medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology professions and other interested stakeholders on the proposed examination fee.

### Policy Statement

In certain circumstances, the Council will require practitioners to sit an examination to measure an individual's level of proficiency in respect of foundational knowledge pertaining to the competencies required for the practice of medical laboratory science or the practice of anaesthetic technology in New Zealand.

The examination will be set under sections 12 and 15 of the Act and be primarily used for overseas-trained practitioners whose qualification has been assessed as being not equivalent, but who have sufficient clinical experience to be considered for registration to practise in New Zealand.

### Refund Policy

Once the closing date for enrolling in a specific examination has passed the examination fee is non-refundable. However, in special circumstances as set out in the Examination Policy document candidates may be given an opportunity to re-sit the examination without incurring an additional examination fee.

## Principles Underlying the Setting of the Examination Fee

The Council used the following principles when calculating the proposed examination fee:

- The proposed examination fee has been set at a level estimated to cover the annual running costs for administration of the examination.
- Establishment costs for the initial set-up of the examination have not been included in the examination fee. Those costs will be borne by the Board's capital expenditure reserves.
- Based on the average numbers of overseas applicants over recent years, the fee level has been calculated on an average of fifty (50) examinations per year.
- The examination fee is in addition to the initial registration fee paid by each candidate.

## Proposed fee

The Council is proposing to set the examination fee at **\$2,086.96** plus GST. The fee is based on a cost recovery basis to cover a number of expense areas including:

- Software licensing
- Examination candidate software administration charge
- Question writer fees
- Examination Committee fees and travel
- Professional development and training for question writers and Examination Committee members