



13 March 2026

Tēnā koutou

Consultation on proposed Council fees and disciplinary levy

Executive summary

Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa | Medical Council of New Zealand (Council) invites feedback on proposed practising certificate (PC) fees, disciplinary levies, and other fees to take effect from 1 July 2026. All figures in this document are GST exclusive unless otherwise stated.

Council proposes a modest increase to the combined PC fee and disciplinary levy for medical practitioners. The adjustment reflects the current annual CPI increase and includes a contribution toward modernising Council's core regulatory technology system, with most implementation costs expected to be funded from existing reserves.

Council remains mindful of the impact of regulatory costs on practitioners. In recent years Council has limited increases to PC fees, including two years where fees were held unchanged and the most recent increase broadly aligned with inflation.

Council also proposes the first fee schedule for Physician Associates (PAs). Council has been appointed as the responsible authority and is establishing the regulatory framework, with registration expected to commence in 2026. The proposed fees reflect the early phase of regulation for a developing profession, with careful management of costs to support financial sustainability as the profession grows.

Your feedback is welcome and will be carefully considered by Council before a final decision is made. If you would like to provide feedback to us, please do so by **5pm Friday 10 April 2026**.

Current proposals

Council sets practising certificate fees and disciplinary levies under sections 130 and 131 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act). This consultation document outlines the proposed fees and levies for the 2026/27 financial year (GST exclusive), commencing 1 July 2026, including:

- an increase of \$43.48 (5.3%) to the combined PC fee and disciplinary levy for medical practitioners, bringing the total to \$869.57
- the introduction of a PC fee and disciplinary levy for PAs, with a proposed combined fee of \$1,450 as part of the inaugural fee schedule (refer Appendix 2)
- an inflationary adjustment to most existing fees
- other proposed changes to clarify and present certain fees more transparently, including health screening programme recoveries and professional standards fees; and
- revised fees for recognition of a new vocational scope of practice reflecting updated standards and assessment processes.

Background

Under the Act, Council is responsible for protecting the public by ensuring that medical practitioners and PAs are competent and fit to practise. In April 2025, the Minister of Health announced that PAs would be regulated in New Zealand, with Council appointed as the responsible authority. This responsibility is now established in legislation, and Council is progressing the regulatory framework, with registration expected to open later in the year.

In September 2025, the Government announced its intention to introduce legislation to amend the Act. The proposed amendments aim to support timely access to high-quality healthcare by addressing workforce challenges and ensuring regulation enables a competent and sustainable health workforce.

The proposed changes place greater emphasis on timely recognition of qualifications, broader scopes of practice, and greater responsiveness to evolving health service needs. Additional oversight and accountability measures are also proposed, including powers for the Minister to direct regulatory authorities to respond to health system priorities. Any changes to the regulatory framework would need to be implemented and managed by Council. Further information on the proposed amendments to the Act can be found [here](#).

Fee setting principles

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the cost of health practitioner regulation is met by the professions being regulated. This reflects the collective investment health practitioners make in maintaining professional credibility, public safety and public trust. Council remains mindful of the impact of regulatory costs on practitioners while continuing to meet its statutory obligation to protect the public by ensuring practitioners are competent and fit to practise.

Council follows the Auditor-General's *Setting and administering fees and levies for cost recovery: Good practice guide*. Fees and levies are determined using an activity-based costing approach, so they reflect the cost of the regulatory services provided. Direct costs are attributed to the relevant profession where identifiable, and shared costs and overheads are allocated on a proportionate basis, or another appropriate method. This approach minimises the risk of cross-subsidisation and helps ensure each profession meets the costs associated with its regulation in a fair and equitable manner.

Council maintains reserves for each profession in accordance with its Reserves Policy, with reserve levels reviewed annually as part of the budget process. Reserves support financial sustainability and help manage volatility in disciplinary costs and other regulatory obligations. Council takes a prudent and cost-effective approach by budgeting conservatively, prioritising resources, and adjusting fees and levies where necessary to maintain appropriate reserve levels.

Medical practitioners - Proposed fees

Practising certificate fee and disciplinary levy

	2025/26 Current Fee	2026/27 Proposed Fee	\$ Change	% Change
Practising certificate (PC) fee	\$600.00	\$630.44	+ \$30.44	
Disciplinary levy	\$226.09	\$239.13	+ \$13.04	
Total PC fee and disciplinary levy (ex GST)	\$826.09	\$869.57	+ \$43.48	+ 5.3 %
Total PC fee and disciplinary levy (inc GST)	\$950.00	\$1,000.00	+ \$50.00	

The proposed PC fee and disciplinary levy have been determined having regard to:

- an inflationary adjustment of 3.1%, reflecting the annual CPI increase
- a contribution toward the modernisation of Council's core regulatory technology system, to ensure systems remain fit for purpose, secure and resilient, and responsive to legislative and regulatory changes. Implementation costs in the coming year are expected to be funded primarily from existing reserves, together with a contribution from the proposed fee increase (subject to Council approval). Implementation is expected to extend into the 2027/28 financial year, when completion is targeted.
- Council's statutory, strategic and business objectives
- budgeted and projected operating costs for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years
- the level and sustainability of the Council's reserves relating to the medical profession; and
- the anticipated cost of disciplinary activity, recognising the uncertainty of disciplinary matters and factoring a reduction in disciplinary reserves toward Council's long-term reserve level.

Rationale for proposed changes to the disciplinary levy

Where concerns raise questions about a practitioner's conduct or safety to practise, Council may refer the matter to an independent Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) for investigation. Following investigation, the PCC may lay charges before the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (Tribunal) where it considers a practitioner may have breached professional standards set by Council.

At the time of writing, there are 31 active cases before a Professional Conduct Committee (PCC), with a further 13 cases before the Tribunal. The 2026/27 budget considers these current matters and assumes that the level of referrals and activity before PCCs and the Tribunal will be similar to the current financial year.

Disciplinary costs are difficult to predict. Council has no control over the number or complexity of matters that arise and must investigate and act where concerns are raised in order to protect the public and maintain professional standards. The proposed levy factors the anticipated cost of disciplinary activity and supports a managed reduction of disciplinary reserves toward Council's long-term reserve level with a \$1.3m deficit budgeted for the 2026/27 financial year in order to help reduce the current reserve levels.

Disciplinary levies fund the costs of investigating and prosecuting conduct concerns following notifications to Council. Notifications may arise from a range of sources including members of the public, colleagues, employers, other health practitioners, the Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC), Police, or through court notifications.

The costs associated with disciplinary cases vary significantly depending on the nature and complexity of the matter. PCC investigations can typically range from \$15,000 to \$40,000, with more complex investigations exceeding this amount. Where charges proceed to the Tribunal, total costs can range from \$70,000 to \$350,000 or more, depending on the number of hearing days, legal complexity, and the number of patients involved.

While the Tribunal may award costs to Council when charges are upheld, historically these awards recover only a portion of the total costs incurred and recovery from practitioners can be uncertain. For this reason, disciplinary levy funding is required to ensure Council can meet the costs of investigating and prosecuting disciplinary matters when they arise.

Other proposed fee adjustments

An across-the-board inflationary adjustment of 3.1% has been applied to most existing fees. Other proposed fee adjustments include:

Screening programme fees

The proposed changes specify screening programme fees as fixed amounts to improve transparency and meet regulatory requirements. These fees relate to alcohol and drug testing required as part of Council's fitness-to-practise processes. Testing is undertaken by independent providers, with costs varying according to the type and number of substances screened.

Professional standards fees

Professional standards fees reflect established practice and existing fees which are now presented for transparency. They apply only where a doctor is required to undertake a performance assessment or educational programme.

Recognition of a new vocational scope of practice

Council has recently approved updated standards and a revised staged process for recognising new vocational scopes of practice. To reflect this, the previous single application fee has been replaced with two stage-based fees, payable at the relevant stage of assessment. These fees apply only to organisations seeking recognition of a new vocational scope of practice and reflect the additional evaluation, expert input and consultation required under the revised process. Applications of this nature are rare.

Physician Associates - Proposed fees

Council is progressing the regulatory framework, including proposed scopes of practice, qualifications and registration pathways, supervision requirements, and expectations relating to cultural safety and equity in healthcare delivery. A proposed fee schedule is outlined in [Appendix 2](#), reflecting the anticipated costs of regulating a small and newly regulated profession.

At this early stage, Council estimates that 75 PAs will register in the next financial year. There are currently around 50 PAs practising in New Zealand, with growth projected over the coming years following regulation of the profession. If the final regulatory settings or actual registration volumes differ materially from current assumptions, Council may review the fee settings to ensure they remain appropriate.

Practising certificate fee and disciplinary levy (PAs)

	2026/27 Proposed Fee
Practising certificate (PC) fee	\$1,200.00
Disciplinary levy	\$250.00
Total PC fee and disciplinary levy (ex GST)	\$1,450.00
Total PC fee and disciplinary levy (inc GST)	\$1,667.50

The proposed PC fee and disciplinary levy have been determined having regard to:

- Council's statutory, strategic and business objectives
- budgeted and projected costs to complete establishment of the regulatory framework and support operational activities in the 2026/27 financial year
- the level and sustainability of the Council's reserves relating to the PA profession, noting the profession is in the early stages of regulation. Residual funding (approximately \$0.3m) associated with the establishment of regulation is expected to support early operations and contribute to building appropriate reserve levels as the profession establishes. While disciplinary costs are unlikely to be

incurred in the first year, this cannot be guaranteed and disciplinary reserves will be built progressively over time; and

- ensuring fees are set on a cost-recovery basis so that each profession meets the costs associated with its own regulation, avoiding cross-subsidisation between professions.

Other proposed registration fees – PAs

Appendix 2 outlines other proposed fees for registration-related activities.

An application for registration fee would apply to first-time applicants to assess qualifications, competence and fitness to practise. This fee is aligned with the comparable health system application process for medical practitioners, reflecting the closest equivalent assessment pathway appropriate for assessing PA applicants.

Not all fees will necessarily be charged, as some apply only where specific services are requested or required. These fees are aligned with comparable services provided to medical practitioners, reflecting the similar regulatory processes, resourcing and overheads involved.

Overview of draft budget 2026/27

At a consolidated level, excluding the provision for modernising Council’s core regulatory technology system, the draft budget provides for:

- total income of \$27.5m, \$1.5m above the current financial year’s budget
- total expenditure of \$28.8m, \$0.2m lower the current financial year’s budget; and
- a resulting budgeted deficit of \$1.3m, primarily attributable to the medical profession’s disciplinary fund.

The draft budget also includes a \$4m provision for the modernisation of Council’s core regulatory technology system, which supports key regulatory functions including practitioner registration, notifications, and disciplinary case management. The current system is no longer considered fit for purpose, is increasingly costly to maintain, and requires modernisation to support Council’s future regulatory needs.

This technology project aims to ensure Council’s regulatory systems remain responsive to legislative and regulatory changes, improve efficiency in meeting practitioner and stakeholder needs, and strengthen the security, privacy and resilience of Council’s regulatory infrastructure. Council is exploring the implementation of a proven off-the-shelf regulatory platform used by other regulators, rather than developing a bespoke system, to manage risk and support a conservative and cost-effective approach.

Council is currently undertaking product selection and due diligence to inform a final recommendation, which is expected to be considered by Council in June. Implementation is planned to commence during the 2026/27 financial year and extend into the 2027/28 financial year, when completion is targeted. Costs are expected to be funded primarily from existing reserves and through reductions in development and maintenance costs associated with the current system. Cost estimates are continuing to be refined through the current evaluation process and will inform the final recommendation to Council.

While this consultation relates to the 2026/27 financial year only, implementation of the technology modernisation is expected to span more than one financial year. Future funding requirements will be considered through Council’s annual budget and fee-setting processes, having regard to Council’s reserves and the impact on practitioners.

A summary of the draft budget is provided in Appendix 3.

Feedback and submissions

Council invites your feedback on the proposed changes before a final decision is made. If you would like to provide feedback, please do so by **5pm Friday 10 April 2026**.

Council will consider all submissions before making a final decision. Following this a notice will be placed in the New Zealand Gazette for an effective date of 1 July 2026.

Responses can be submitted to:

Fee Consultation

Medical Council of New Zealand

PO Box 10509

Wellington 6143

Email: feeconsultation@mcnz.org.nz

Nāku noa nā,



Joan Simoen

Manukura | Chief Executive

Medical Council of New Zealand

Appendix 1: Medical Practitioners - Existing fee schedule and proposed fees from 1 July 2026 (excluding GST)

Fees	Current	Proposed
A Practising certificate (PC) or Interim PC including Disciplinary Levy		
> Annual PC fee	826.09	869.57
> Application to vary existing PC	326.50	336.62
> PC quarterly fee (used only when bringing a doctor into their registration cycle)	206.52	217.39
B Disciplinary levy for 12 months	226.09	239.13
C Registration fees		
<i>Application for registration in a provisional general/general scope of practice:</i>		
> Provisional general registration (NZ/Australian/NZREX graduate)	326.50	336.62
> Provisional general registration (Australian General Registrant)	522.40	538.59
> Provisional general registration (UK General Registrant)	522.40	538.59
> Provisional general registration (competent authority)	522.40	538.59
> Provisional general registration (comparable health system)	1,632.48	1,683.09
> General registration (NZ/Australian graduate)	522.40	538.59
<i>Application for registration in a provisional vocational / vocational scope of practice:</i>		
> Vocational registration (for those on a general scope of practice, who have been awarded the prescribed qualification - VOC1)	261.20	269.30
> Vocational registration (for those who are not registered in the General scope of practice, who have been awarded the prescribed qualification - VOC2)	522.40	538.59
> Provisional vocational registration (for international medical graduates with overseas specialist qualifications - VOC3 and VOC4)	3,917.96	4,039.42
> Vocational practice assessment	17,152.58	17,684.31
<i>College advice fees for registration in a provisional vocational scope of practice</i>		
> Paper based assessment	4,737.54	4,884.40
> Interview	2,004.35	2,066.48
> Re-evaluation	1,457.71	1,502.90
> Advice on supervisor/employment	242.95	250.48
<i>For registration in a special purpose scope of practice:</i>		
> Special purpose postgraduate training	1,044.79	1,077.18
> Special purpose locum tenens / teleradiology / research	653.00	673.24
<i>Other registration-related fees:</i>		
> Application to change existing scope or conditions	326.50	336.62
> Restoration of registration	326.50	336.62
> Annual Retention fee (non-practising status)	141.17	145.55
D Certificate Signed by the Registrar		
> Certificate of professional status, Certificate of registered information, and any other document confirming registration status/standing or internship details	76.65	79.03

Fees	Current	Proposed
E New Zealand Registration Examination (NZREX Clinical)		
> Application fee	726.12	748.63
> Examination fee	4,189.21	4,319.08
> Request for recount	369.42	380.87
> Request for resit (impairment, incident or exam process)	554.13	571.31
> Withdrawal, or transfer, prior to, or on, the cut-off date for the specified exam (6 weeks prior to exam)	369.42	380.87
> Withdrawal after the cut-off date for the specified exam (20 working days or more prior to exam)	837.84	863.81
F Screening Programmes		
> Administration fee (per test)	148.99	75.00
> Laboratory testing fee for urine/blood/re-calibration of breathalyser unit/other (per test)		50.00
> Laboratory testing fee for hair (per test, single drug group)		200.00
> Additional laboratory testing fee for hair (per additional drug group tested)		75.00
> Laboratory testing fee for 10-panel substance screening (per test)		500.00
G Professional Standards Fees		
<i>Sexual misconduct assessment (SMAT)</i>		
> Administration fee (SMAT)	1,946.00	2,006.33
> SMAT assessment fee (per hour)		350.00
<i>Education supervision</i>		
> Education / supervision programme administration fee	2,598.44	2,678.99
> Education / supervision programme fee (per session)		300.00
<i>Competence monitoring</i>		
> Competence / recertification programme fee (per hour)		180.00
H Educational – Pre-Vocational		
Accreditation of training provider	32,423.31	33,428.43
J Educational - Vocational		
> Accreditation New Zealand-only training providers		
- Training provider with 300 or more paying members	22,641.39	23,343.27
- Training provider with fewer than 300 paying members	17,495.62	18,037.98
> Accreditation of training providers recertification programme only	10,291.54	10,610.58
K Recognition of a new vocational scope of practice		
> Initial assessment (Stage 1)		6,000.00
> Assessment (Stage 2)		12,000.00
L Register		
> Register for 12 months downloaded from the Council's website	334.94	345.32
> Request for one copy of the Register	167.46	172.65
> Register data requests (per hour)	167.46	172.65

Appendix 2: Physician Associates - Proposed fees from 1 July 2026 (excluding GST)

Fees	Proposed
A Practising certificate (PC) or Interim PC including Disciplinary Levy	
> Annual PC fee	1,450.00
> Application to vary existing PC	336.62
> PC quarterly fee (used only when bringing a PA into their registration cycle)	362.50
B Disciplinary levy for 12 months	250.00
C Registration fees	
<i>Application for registration:</i>	
> Provisional PA / General PA scope of practice	1,683.09
<i>Other registration-related fees:</i>	
> Application to change existing scope or conditions	336.62
> Restoration of registration	336.62
> Annual Retention fee (non-practising status)	145.55
D Certificate Signed by the Registrar	
> Certificate of professional status, Certificate of registered information, and any other document confirming registration status/standing	79.03

Appendix 3: 2026/27 Draft budget

Consolidated budget

Income	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Budget - Draft
Operating	18,670	19,594	20,875
Disciplinary	5,206	5,560	6,067
Examination	581	885	590
Total income	24,457	26,039	27,532
Expenses			
Operating	18,396	21,021	20,927
Disciplinary	6,877	7,157	7,386
Examination	576	857	506
Total expenses	25,849	29,035	28,819
Project	-	830	4,034
Net surplus / (deficit)	(1,392)	(3,826)	(5,321)

2026/27 Budget (By profession)

Income	Medical	PA	Total
Operating	20,526	349	20,875
Disciplinary	6,048	19	6,067
Examination	590	-	590
Total income	27,164	368	27,532
Expenses			
Operating	20,587	340	20,927
Disciplinary	7,386	-	7,386
Examination	506	-	506
Total expenses	28,479	340	28,819
Project	4,034	-	4,034
Net surplus / (deficit)	(5,349)	28	(5,321)