

Medical laboratory science fees consultation outcome

Thank you to those who found time to read and respond to the consultation document on its 2024 review of fees payable by medical laboratory science (MLS) practitioners. This consultation ran from 23 October to 2 December 2024, proposing an increase in fees for medical laboratory science practitioners.

A total of 66 responses were received. Two of these were from organisations and 64 were from registered medical laboratory science practitioners. This represents a response rate of 1.6% for the total workforce who hold practising certificates.

After reviewing feedback (and considering its current financial situation) the Medical Sciences Council has determined that:

- an increase in fees is required to ensure the ongoing financial viability of the Council
- the disciplinary levy will not be increased and will remain at \$50 (Exc GST).

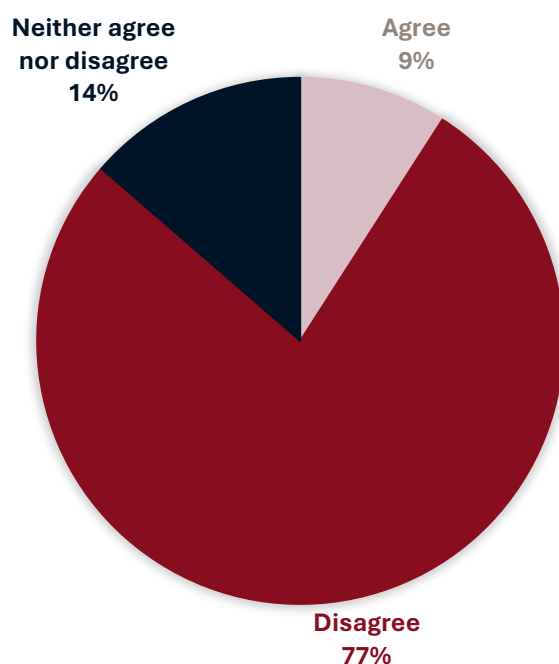
For most practitioners this will mean that the annual practising certificate cost will rise by \$29.48.

The 2025-2026 fees and levies will be published in the New Zealand gazette on 18 December 2024 and will take effect from 12 February 2025.

The schedule of fees can be viewed [here](#).

Summary of consultation outcome – proposed fee changes

Responses to the proposal to increase all fees were considered with the options – agree, disagree or neither agree nor disagree.



For **those that disagreed** with the increase, the **main reasons** given are listed below:

Recent increase	Reference made to the fees increasing significantly last year.
Workforce	Reference to the poor working conditions of laboratory staff including job freezes and underpaid staff.
Funding	Reference to the financial pressure laboratories are currently experiencing with insufficient funding.
CPI	Reference to the increase in fees being significantly above CPI.
MSC service	Reference to the MSC not providing sufficient services and rising MSC costs.
Expense	Reference to the fee becoming too expensive.
Insufficient reasons	The reasons/financial information provided were not sufficient to explain the increase in fees.

Reasons for increase

The Council considered the responses that were provided to it.

The Council receives no government funding for its operations and is reliant on charging fees to fund its activities.

- The Council recognises practitioner fees were increased recently for the 2024/2025 practising year. This increase was necessary when considering the proposed budget and service level needed to provide efficient regulation of practitioners.
- The Council has sought independent financial advice on how it can continue to remain financially viable into the future. Advice was provided that showed a series of fee increases would be required to ensure the ongoing viability of the Council.

You can view the Council's audited financial statements in our [annual reports](#) and on the [Charities website](#).

- The Council is also experiencing cost pressures relating to delivering its core functions and the strategic plan.
- The Council is investing in new IT infrastructure to improve the processing of registration and practising certificate applications, and has just recommenced the review of the Medical Laboratory Science practitioner scope of practice project.
- The Council has many functions required under the Act which must be paid for.
- The Council is audited to ensure it is performing its required functions.
- The Council is mindful that it must balance its expenditure on these functions with the fees charged to practitioners.

Fees comparison

Although fees are increasing to meet increasing costs, when compared to professions of similar size, the annual practising certificate (APC) fee remains consistent with, or lower than, other similar sized professions.

A core strategy that has enabled the Council to keep its fees lower is its partnership arrangement with the Medical Radiation Technologists Board (MRTB), whereby secretariat services are shared. This allows the Council to realise benefits such as more efficient staffing resources, the sharing of office accommodation, and a common IT infrastructure. The Council is also careful when comparing the fees charged by other professions as there are often factors that need to be taken into consideration that may not be obvious.

Profession	APC cost (inc GST) (2025/2026) ¹	Number practising (2024)²
Medical laboratory science	\$430.40 (inc disciplinary levy of \$57.50)	4,027
Nurse	\$130.00 (inc disciplinary levy of \$33.00)	69,621 (2023)
Doctor	\$927.70 (inc disciplinary levy of \$215.00)	20,048
Occupational therapist	\$497.00 (inc disciplinary levy of \$20)*	3,555
Podiatrist	\$992.00 (inc disciplinary levy of \$175.00)	476 (2023)
Optometrist	\$1,222.00 (inc disciplinary levy of \$37.00)	970
Dental (six different scopes)	\$879.94 - \$1,233.02 (depends on scope)	5,014 (2023)

**2024/2025 fee - current consultation for a proposed fee increase is underway.*

¹ Extracted from the NZ Gazette. Several professions have updated their fees for 2024/2025.

² Extracted from respective annual report or workforce data. Actual numbers vary over the year.