

# Submission on ACC regulated payments for treatment

**Name**

Mark Laslett

**Email**

drmarklaslettprofessional@gmail.com

**Business or organisation name (if applicable)****Position title (if applicable)**

Consultant / Specialist Physiotherapist

**Is this an individual submission or on behalf of a business or organisation?**

Individual

**Do you have a view on the proposed 1.72 percent and 2.05 percent increases to the payments to treatment providers listed in Table 1 in the discussion document? Please provide reasons for your view.**

The increase reflects inflation, which, over time slowly falls behind the actual increase in costs and fiscal creep. It sounds reasonable but isn't. Those in private practice - the backbone of the services used by ACC - have known that overtime the proportion of the fee paid by the patient must steadily increase. This fact conflicts with the stated objective of making copayments low enough to assure access to rehabilitation is not compromised by cost factors to patients.

**Do you have a view on the proposal to split out classes of Specified Treatment Providers into the separate classes shown in Table 1 in the discussion document, so payment rates can be differentiated in the future? Please provide reasons for your view.**

No

**Do you have a view on the proposed 2.05 percent increase to the payments to Audiologists listed in Table 2 in the discussion document? Please provide reasons for your view.**

No opinion

**Do you have a view on removing all provisions that require deductions from regulated dental payments? Please provide reasons for your view.**

No Opinion

**Do you have any overall comments that you would like to make on the review or recommendations?**

The amount paid per session to physiotherapists is too low. I can think of no professional service that can function at \$60/hour when 50-70% is consumed by expenses. The residue is barely above the minimum wage.

Actually the GP fees are too low as well, but consider the differential between GP and physiotherapist. If a GP consult is 10 minutes, ACC will pay GPs >\$190/hour. That's three times the physiotherapy hourly rate of \$60/hour. Even if GP appointments are 15 minutes, that's twice what the physiotherapist gets paid - bearing in mind, that expenses and overheads for physiotherapists are very similar to GPs.

Without physiotherapists, there would be virtually no rehabilitation system in New Zealand. The average salary for physiotherapists is unsustainable. Co-payments must increase disproportionately and this will compromise the stated objective of making rehabilitation affordable.

**Date submitted**

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