


15th December 2016



RE: Submission regarding the increase in APC for Dentists and specialists

Dear Marie and members of the Dental Council,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit regarding the large increase in the APC for dentists and specialists. I wish to address this with reference to two issues.

Firstly, upon discussion with the executive of the Auckland Dental Association concern was raised regarding this increase in fees specifically related to the disciplinary levy. The feeling was that this levy should in fact be gathered on a "user pays" basis and thus less burden for the whole profession. User pays is the ethos which is both politically and culturally acceptable these days and would cut the need for such a steep rise.

Secondly, my concern is around the expense related to the Standards Review process. I feel I have a somewhat insider view of the process and I fully understand that the DCNZ has obligations under the Act to set standards. The process of how this is done however, and the comprehensive nature of the standards produced is very legally driven. Until the disaster which Dr Herbert Green introduced into New Zealand culture and history, there was a more collaborative and collegial approach to such matters but I appreciate that the social contract of trust was somewhat negated at that point.

However, you may remember I was initially excluded from the Standards Review Committee because of the legal advice that you received, regarding the conflict of interest I MAY have had since I had ties with the NZDA. I was able to disprove that I worked for the NZDA however and regained the position (now disbanded of course). To me this highlights an underpinning view that DCNZ is "us" and the dental profession and its association NZDA is "them". This leads to an adversarial and unhelpful model of relationship between the DCNZ and the profession. Perhaps this is personality driven and maybe it is a model prescribed by the legal advice but I submit that this leads to the inflated the cost of creating the Standards and leads to this large increase in APC. Double doing by the profession and the council leads to wasted money.

Of course being so late in the year is not ideal for the council to reflect on such matters , but I hope that this large increase does not go ahead or , even worse, be followed by similar increases in the future.

Complements of the season to you all.

Tania Stuart