

Meeting

Combined Dental Agreement – 2025/26 Pricing Review

Location:	Online (Microsoft Teams)		
Date:	12 June 2025	Time:	3:00pm – 5.00pm
Chairperson:	Deborah Woodley, National Director Starting Well	Minutes by:	
Attendees:	<p>Representative Bodies Collective</p> <p>Eru McGregor (Te Ao Mārama)</p> <p>Anishma Ram (New Zealand Oral Health Association (NZOHA))</p> <p>New Zealand Dental Association (NZDA)</p> <p>Ngareka Bensemann (Marsden Cove Dental)</p> <p>Shash Patel (Absolute Dental)</p> <p>Arun Natarajan (Paediatric specialist dentist and Happy Smiles)</p> <p>Simon Templeman (Simply Dental)</p> <p>Mo Amso (NZDA CEO)</p> <p>Health New Zealand (participants)</p> <p>Lisa Gestro (Group Manager – System Integration, Te Manawa Taki Region)</p> <p>Saskia Booiman (Group Manager – Young People)</p> <p>Geoff Hunt (Approving Dental Officer and hospital dentist at Health NZ Hutt Valley)</p> <p>Health New Zealand (Observers/Secretariat)</p> <p>Justine Mecchia (System Design Manager – Oral Health)</p> <p>Alana Hislop (Service Development Advisor – Oral Health)</p>		
Apologies:	<p>Abdul Aziz (Pasifika Dental Association (PDA))</p> <p>Justin Wall (Te Rōpu Niho Ora)</p> <p>David Excell (Eastbourne Dental Centre, participating as an NZDA nominee)</p> <p>Bart Eisenbarth (Approving Dental Officer, Te Manawa Taki, participating as Health New Zealand)</p> <p>Kylie McCosh (Principal Service Development Manager – Oral Health)</p>		

Agenda

Item no:	Details	Speaker
1	Karakia and introductions	Deborah Woodley
2	Opening remarks	Saskia Booiman
3	Health NZ to present the proposed price uplift options and modelling	Saskia Booiman
4	Feedback on the proposed price uplift options and modelling	Representative Bodies
5	Other business - Operational guidelines - CDA variation - CDA new agreement	Saskia Booiman
6	Next steps	Deborah Woodley
7	Karakia	Deborah Woodley

Notes

Karakia and opening remarks

- Deborah Woodley opened the meeting with karakia and welcomed everyone to the pricing review meeting for the Combined Dental Agreement (CDA) 2025/26 Annual Review.
- Deborah shared apologies from Justin Wall, David Excell and Abdul Aziz.

Opening remarks

- Saskia Booiman acknowledged and thanked everyone for the short turnaround time between notification of the budget uplift amount and scheduling the meeting. Saskia shared that we are working to a deadline of 23 June 2025 to confirm pricing in order to allow time for processing the increased pricing changes within the claiming system, so the new pricing is live from 1 July 2025.
- Saskia committed that the team would write up and distribute the minutes from this meeting as soon as possible.
- Saskia shared context to the collective meeting with all representative bodies.
- Saskia confirmed that Pulp Cap (direct or indirect), Pulpotomy (full or partial) and Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) codes will be introduced in the new agreement as cost neutral, which means they will not be funded out of the additional uplift. Saskia also confirmed that SDF will be introduced under prior approval for the first 12 months and that the Pulp Cap (direct or indirect) code will remain priced at \$150.00 excluding GST.

7. Geoff Hunt provided further explanation as to why Pulp Cap pricing will remain at \$150.00 for 12 months and noted that there will be opportunity to review pricing after 12 months.
8. **Action:** Health NZ to circulate minutes from this meeting to all representative body members.

Health New Zealand (Health NZ) presented proposed price uplift options and modelling

9. Saskia shared the assumptions to support the modelling and presented two price uplift options that Health NZ had modelled, noting that further details can be found in the PDF document that had been circulated ahead of the meeting.
10. The two proposed price uplift options were:
 - a) A uniform 3% uplift on all current fee codes under the CDA.
 - b) Increasing lab-based fee items to better meet current market rates, with a 2.48% uplift on all remaining fee codes under the CDA.
11. Simon Templeman asked how 2.48% uplift was calculated in the second proposed price uplift option (increasing lab-based items), Saskia provided an explanation of the calculation. Volumes data was needed to determine how much of the uplift should be attributed to these codes, volumes were based on the 2024 calendar year. Saskia confirmed that Health NZ modelling assumptions erred on the side of benefitting CDA providers rather than benefitting Health NZ.

Feedback on the proposed price uplift options and modelling

12. Ngareka Bensemann shared that she would find it difficult to go with option 2, given the large disparity between current codes and market rate. She also commented that lab-based treatments are rarely completed in her practice, therefore her preference would be a uniform 3% uplift across all current fee codes. Ngareka acknowledged the challenging environment with limited funding available.
13. Simon supported the 3% uplift across all current fee codes. He shared that laboratory work varies a lot across the members and is infrequent, therefore a uniform 3% uplift on all current fee codes would be a more equitable approach.
14. Eru McGregor agreed with Ngareka and Simon and shared that he had raised the uplift options at the recent Te Ao Mārama executive meeting, and they agree that a uniform 3% uplift would be more beneficial and equitable.
15. Anishma Ram shared that NZOHA are also in support of the uniform 3% uplift across all current fee codes rather than differential uplift that resulted in a larger increase for lab-based fees.
16. Shash Patel also agreed that the 3% uplift across all fee codes would be more beneficial to all members.
17. Arun Natarajan also agreed with the other members.
18. Mo Amso thanked the NZDA members for sharing and thanked Health NZ for the work undertaken to get to this point and considering the two options. He shared that NZDA will be undertaking a member's survey on the proposed uplift options and will present the feedback by next Thursday 19 June 2025.
19. Mo shared that the feedback from NZDA members from earlier in the year was that lab-based items were becoming difficult to sustain in private practice. Mo noted that this comment reflected the overall challenges of the pricing for CDA services compared to practice fees.

20. **Action:** NZDA to survey members on uplift options and present findings to Health NZ and Representative collective by Thursday 19 June 2025.

Other business

21. Health NZ has contracted a technical writer to update the CDA Operational Guidelines. Saskia shared that they are progressing well, and we will aim to send a draft for review and feedback by the end of June 2025. New codes and guidance for their use will be included in the updated CDA Operational Guidelines.
22. **Action:** Health NZ to share a draft of the updated CDA Operational Guidelines to all representative bodies by the end of June 2025 for review and feedback.
23. Health NZ has commenced the process to extend the existing CDA contracts for 12 months to ensure payments can be made from 1 July 2025 while we complete annual review. A copy of the variation for term template and accompanying letter has been provided to all representative bodies. Letters and variation for term documentation are currently being sent out to CDA holders. Once the annual review process has been completed, we intend to end the variation agreement before the end date, to coincide with the start date of the new version of the CDA.
24. Changes for the 2025/26 year, including fee schedules, will be progressed through a new version of the agreement once annual review is completed. The new version of the agreement is expected to be in place no later than 1 September 2025. A new version of the agreement will be issued to supersede the variation once annual review is concluded.

Next Steps

25. Deborah summarised the actions from the meeting, including that NZDA will consult with members and provide this feedback to Health NZ by Thursday 19 June 2025. Health NZ and Representative bodies will then meet to confirm pricing on Thursday 19 June 2025.
26. Deborah acknowledged the strong feedback and preference for the option to apply the 3% uplift to all current fee codes.
27. NZDA asked for an update on how the 3% was agreed and what percentage uplift other national agreements received. Deborah and Lisa Gestro provided context to the 3% uplift and shared that most national agreements received a 3% uplift.
28. Ngareka asked what the plan is after price changes are agreed and if this group will continue to meet. Saskia advised that once price has been agreed, this will formally conclude the 2025/26 CDA annual review. Subject to funding and a procurement process, Health NZ has committed to undertake a review of services funded under the CDA which there will be an opportunity for representative bodies to inform the scope of the review.
29. Deborah thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting with karakia.
30. **Action:** Health NZ to update the placeholder meeting invite to a confirmed meeting invite for Thursday 19 June 2025 3.00-5.00pm.

Actions

Details	Due Date
Health NZ to circulate minutes from this meeting to all representative body members.	June 2025
NZDA to survey members on uplift options and present findings to Health NZ and Representative collective by Thursday 19 June 2025.	19 June 2025
Health NZ to share a draft of the updated CDA Operational Guidelines to all representative bodies by the end of June 2025 for review and feedback.	30 June 2025
Health NZ to update the placeholder meeting invite to a confirmed meeting invite for Thursday 19 June 2025 3.00-5.00pm.	Completed