



Hearing Loss Services and ACC

A guide for hearing loss providers

ACC is a Crown entity that provides comprehensive, no-fault personal injury cover for New Zealanders and visitors to the country, as set out in the Accident Compensation Act 2001 (AC Act).

Our three core functions are to:

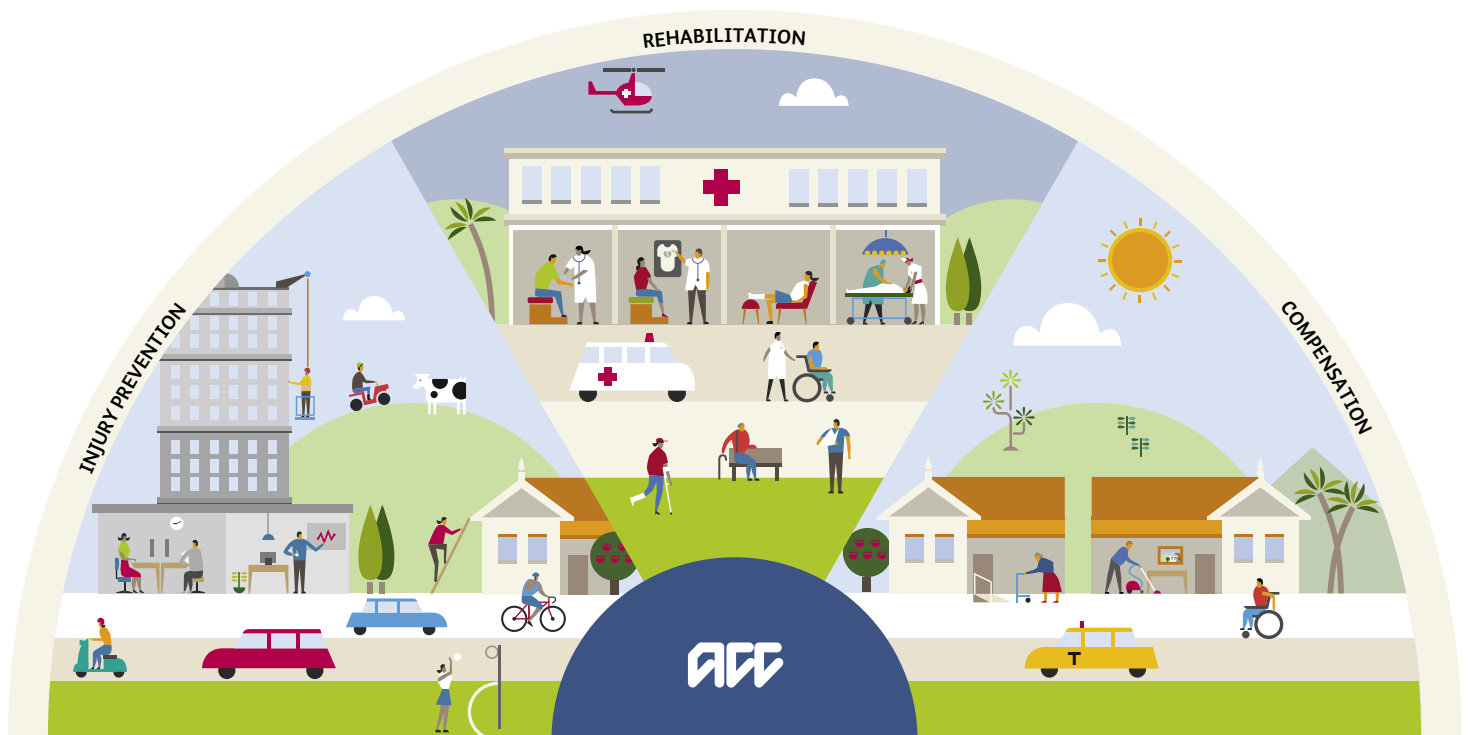
1. Help prevent injuries at work, at home, during sport and recreation, on the road, or injuries caused by treatment
2. Reduce the physical, emotional and social impacts of people's injuries
3. Minimise personal financial loss by paying contributions to treatment costs, and paying lump sum compensation or weekly compensation to people who can't work because of their injuries.

To work together effectively and in our clients' best interests, we need to define and align our expectations for our clients.

This document outlines our expectations if you are receiving funding from ACC, and provides more detailed information on:

- our regulations, policies and procedures
- the types of injuries we cover
- ensuring necessary and appropriate treatment.

We look forward to working with you.



Our expectations and responsibilities

We've developed a set of expectations and responsibilities to make sure we work together and provide our clients with services that help them return to work and everyday life as safely and quickly as possible.

As a provider of rehabilitation services, we expect you to:

- provide our clients with services that are goal oriented, based on evidence and clinically justified
- comply with your professional standards and ethics
- comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 2020 and the Health Information Privacy Code 2020 to protect our clients' information.

In carrying out our functions, we must ensure that we protect the sustainability of the scheme for all New Zealanders.

This means when we provide funding to you to deliver services under the Accident Compensation scheme, we expect you to:

- comply with the AC Act, our policies and procedures
- maintain appropriate clinical records
- invoice us appropriately.

You can download the legislation below or search for it on the [New Zealand Legislation website](#):

- [Accident Compensation Act 2001](#) (PDF 1.9MB)
- [Privacy Act 2020](#) (PDF 1MB)
- [Health Information Privacy Code 2020](#) (PDF 1MB).

In return, we will:

- pay you promptly for all necessary and appropriate services
- support you to make sure our clients get the help they need to recover
- provide support to help you understand our legislation, policies and procedures
- provide timely feedback if we have concerns about service delivery, documentation or invoicing
- work with you to address any concerns.

Please carefully review the section 'Keeping clinical records'. The 'Managing Performance' section outlines how ACC works with you to ensure you meet our expectations. If you do not meet these requirements, ACC may change the way we work with you.

Key elements governing our relationship

We are guided by a few key elements when we fund services for our clients.

Our governing legislation, regulations, contracts and policies

In line with the AC Act, we have created policies and procedures to help us deliver the necessary outcomes of the legislation.

You can find more information on our policies, procedures and guidelines in the resources section of the ACC website: <https://www.acc.co.nz/for-providers/> This is where you can find information and forms for registering as a provider (i.e. clinician) or vendor (usually a company or other entity providing health services).

We purchase over \$2 billion in healthcare services per year in the following ways:

- the Accident Compensation (Liability to Pay or Contribute to Cost of Treatment) Regulations – this is our default purchasing option covering mostly minor injuries
- under contract
- through Public Health Acute Services (PHAS)
- the ***Accident Compensation (Apportioning Entitlements for Hearing Loss) Regulations 2010***.

As “responsible stewards”, one of ACC’s core values, we ensure that we pay for only the services that are necessary and appropriate. We rely on your honesty and integrity when invoicing us for these services.

Standards set by professional bodies

Our legislation requires all treatment providers to be registered with their regulatory authorities and to hold current Annual Practising Certificates. In the case of audiologists, membership of the NZ Audiological Society is required in lieu of a registration authority.

The definition of an audiologist also excludes members of the society who are themselves hearing aid suppliers – ***Accident Compensation Regulations 2019***.

We expect you to comply with the professional and practice standards set by your professional organisation.

The Treaty of Waitangi

ACC is committed to ensuring that the services you provide meet our obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Guidelines on Māori Cultural Competencies

What ACC covers

ACC receives approximately two million claims a year for personal injuries including mental injuries.

Personal injuries include:

- physical injuries (including fatal injuries)
- work-related gradual process injuries, diseases and infections, e.g. asbestosis or work-related hearing loss
- treatment injuries, i.e. physical injuries sustained while receiving treatment from registered health practitioners.

Mental injuries may be covered if they were caused by a physical injury, a specific event in the workplace or certain criminal acts.

If you are unsure about advising your clients about possible ACC cover, phone the Contact Centre on 0800 222 070.

Establishing whether a client has cover

To establish whether a client's injury is likely to be covered, you should ask the following questions:

- What is the injury?
- Was the injury a result of an accident?
- How did the injury happen?

Under the AC Act, we can only accept claims for injuries that happened as a result of an accident. This includes injuries caused by:

- trauma (i.e. head injury)
- treatment injury
- gradual process (while in a work environment)

Your clinical notes must show that your clients have sustained their hearing loss through accidents and that you can make explicit links between the hearing loss and the accidents. Symptoms such as tinnitus aren't always the result of injuries caused by accidents, and we can't cover conditions caused wholly or substantially by the ageing process or other health conditions.

We only cover accidents and injuries that have happened in New Zealand and, in some cases, to New Zealand residents injured overseas who intend on returning to New Zealand within six months of having left the country. Temporary visitors to New Zealand are covered (while they're in New Zealand) because the no-fault cover means they don't have the right to sue for accidental injuries.

If you think, based on your assessment, that the hearing loss will not meet ACC's cover criteria, it's important that you explain this to your client and support them in other ways.

We manage all claims under the Code of ACC Claimants' Rights.

- ***Sorting out problems with a claim***
- ***Code of ACC Claimants' Rights***

Gradual process hearing loss

Gradual process injuries are injuries or conditions that happen over time and can only be covered by ACC if they are caused by the type of paid work your client does.

We recommend that you use your best judgement, compile a comprehensive clinical and work history and if you believe your client qualifies for cover, that you encourage the client to lodge a claim for our consideration.

Whether or not ACC will accept the claim is determined primarily by an assessment by an otolaryngologist (ENT specialist). If cover is accepted, the level of entitlement (eg hearing aid device contribution) is based on the covered hearing loss (as recommended by the ENT specialist) as a proportion of the total hearing loss (determined by an audiologist).

Gradual process injuries can only be lodged by medical practitioners. If you are not a medical practitioner, you need to refer your client to their GP to lodge the claim.

Our resources

- Forms:
 - [ACC612 Audiometric report for hearing loss](#)
 - [ACC611 Hearing aid trial outcome report](#)
 - ONIHL assessment resources:
- [Search](#) acc.co.nz on “hearing loss”
- Occupational noise levels - a collection of reported measurements link: <https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/provider/occupational-noise-levels-reported-measures-acc8023.pdf>
- Assessment of occupational noise-induced hearing loss for ACC: <https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/provider/assessment-hearing-loss-acc7917.pdf>
- NIHL – evidence update on risk factors:
 - Genetic factors: <https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/research/ONIHL-evidence-genetics.pdf>
 - Impact and impulse noise: <https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/research/ONIHL-evidence-impact-impulse.pdf>
 - Solvent exposure: <https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/research/ONIHL-evidence-solvents.pdf>

Making sure rehabilitation is necessary and appropriate

All assessment or rehabilitation services you provide must be proportional to each client’s injury and expected recovery. According to the AC Act, any services you provide must:

- be necessary and appropriate
- meet the quality required
- be given at the appropriate time and place
- be of a type normally provided by your profession

- be provided by an appropriately qualified provider holding a current annual practising certificate
- assist in restoring the client's health, independence and participation.

For rehabilitative devices, you are required to consider and balance:

- the nature and impact of the injury
- achievement of rehabilitation outcomes
- costs and cost-effectiveness
- the availability of other forms of rehabilitation.

You must also have our prior approval.

Keeping clinical records

Clinical records are a necessary part of the service you provide to our clients. Your clinical records help us understand how you have reached your conclusions and why you provided specific assessment or rehabilitation to our clients.

Your client reports and clinical records should be full and accurate. They should be completed at the time you see the client or shortly afterwards.

Keeping a high professional standard of records is critical and beneficial to you, our clients, other health professionals and us. The quality of your notes may be important if a client is referred to other health providers, if their ACC cover is contested or if we need to review your practice. Your clinical records must show that appropriate services have been provided for the service items you invoice us for.

All professional bodies endorse the responsibility of their members to regard record-keeping as a critical area of competence, and most have processes to support and encourage this. Each profession also has its own standards for record-keeping, so check what your professional body suggests.

When we find absent or poor quality clinical records, we may notify your professional body if we believe there is a risk of harm to the public.

Assessments

Assessments are defined as necessary and appropriate assessments of a client with or seeking cover from ACC. If the assessment is provided using tele-audiology, the service must conform to the NZ Audiological Society's relevant guideline or position statement. You will find a list of hearing-related services below.

They include providing injury-related advice, making referrals, issuing any report to ACC and all relevant documentation that results from the consultation/visit.

Some aspects of assessments are defined in the **Accident Insurance (Occupational Hearing Assessment Procedures) Regulations 1999**. These include:

- audiometer calibration requirements

- who can perform hearing tests (under the regulations only ORL specialists or audiologists can do this – this has been further limited to audiologists by Purdy & Williams, Guideline for diagnosing occupational noise-induced hearing loss. Part 3: Audiometric standards, 2011)
- time since the client has been exposed to noise
- frequencies which should be tested
- relevant standard (ISO 8253.1) for audiometry
- percentage loss of hearing scale
- standard age adjustments

If you are providing a service paid as hourly rates eg AUD15 (Specialised hearing assessment – used for complex assessments eg auditory processing, cochlear implant eligibility assessments), you must bill us in a way that appropriately reflects the proportion of time in a consultation/visit that you spent directly applying your expertise to assess/rehabilitate the client’s covered injury.

Hearing service items and entitlements

All prices exclude GST.

Hearing aid contributions

The ACC contribution levels (but not the MoH payments) are defined in the **Accident Compensation (Apportioning Entitlements for Hearing Loss) Regulations 2010**

Band	Apportionment	Fitting fee (\$ excl GST)	ACC device contribution (\$ excl GST)	MoH device contribution (\$ excl GST)	Total (\$ excl GST)
Monaural					
101	<30%	832.73	458.00	355.00	1,645.73
102	30-59%	832.73	916.00	222.00	1,970.73
103	60-99%	832.73	1,527.00	66.50	2,426.23
104	100%	832.73	1,593.50	0.00	2,426.23
Binaural					
101	<30%	1,142.96	916.00	710.00	2,768.96
102	30-59%	1,142.96	1,832.00	444.00	3,418.96
103	60-99%	1,142.96	3,054.00	133.00	4,329.96
104	100%	1,142.96	3,187.00	0.00	4,329.96

Note that the device contributions are maximum amounts – if wholesale device costs are less than the combined ACC and MoH maximum device contributions, the amount invoiced should be limited to the wholesale cost – deducting first from the MoH contribution, then the ACC contribution.

Other hearing service items

Service item code	Service	Price (\$ excl GST)	Price (\$ incl GST)
HL01	Hearing Assessment Report	160.99	185.14
HL02	Trauma Assessment Pre-treatment	111.13	127.80
HL03	Trauma Assessment Post-treatment	160.99	185.14
AUD05	Evoked Response Audiometry	500.00	575.00
AUD15	Specialised hearing assessment per hour	180.00	207.00
HL12	Device consultation fee No more than 2 from different vendors	102.05	117.36
HL10	Monaural Re-Fitting within one year	311.60	358.34
HL11	Failed Fitting Fee	124.64	143.34
HL20	On-site Repair and Maintenance (max 2 services per year)	51.93	59.72
HL21	Off-site Repair and Maintenance (max per device per 2 years) Time calculated based on service date, looking backwards	207.73	238.89
HL22	Hearing Loss: Rechargeable battery replaced on/off-site (replacement by client not possible)	75.00	86.25
HL30	Ear Mould Contribution - per mould	36.40	41.86
HL31	Ear Mould Service Fee - per service Only available from 12 months post-fitting	55.90	64.29
TRT01	Tinnitus assessment	Actual & reasonable	
TRT02	On-going TRT sessions		
TRT03	Final assessment / report to ACC following TRT Audiologist must be registered as specialist tinnitus provider		
AUD50	Monaural fitting fee for TBI clients	832.73	957.64
AUD55	Monaural device maximum contribution for TBI clients	1,594.00	1,833.10
AUD51	Binaural fitting fee for TBI clients	1,142.96	1,314.40
AUD56	Binaural device maximum contribution for TBI clients	3,186.00	3,663.90
HLBNFF	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: two new hearing aids	1,142.96	1,314.40
HLBRFF	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: Re-aid of two aids	1,142.96	1,314.40
HLMNFF	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: one new hearing aid	832.73	957.64
HLMRFF	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: one hearing aid re-aid	832.73	957.64
AT14	Cochlear implant / BAHA equipment		At cost
ATS2	CI programming services		
RN10	Ear toileting by general nurse	15.31	17.61
RNP100	Ear toileting by specialist ear nurse	40.00	46.00
AUD40	Hearing therapy (per hour)	75.00	86.25

Batteries

Hearing aid batteries are sent to ACC clients with cover and entitlement when ordered by the audiologist, usually at the time of finalising the fitting. Clients can request further supplies on-line using their ACC claim number and date of birth at icanhear.co.nz.

If your client's device/s require specific batteries, make sure you identify this on the order form.

Services for children

Hearing devices for children can be supplied in the normal way via the Ministry of Health's contracted supplier – currently Enable New Zealand. The child's ACC claim number should be supplied with the application.

For audiologists in private practice, ACC can instead purchase services using the following codes:

Service item code	Service	Price (\$ excl GST)	Price (\$ incl GST)
AUD16	Hearing Needs Assessment (child)	102.05	117.36
HL15	Monaural fitting fee (child)	832.73	957.64
HL16	Binaural fitting fee (child)	1,142.96	1,314.40
HL18	Hearing aid/s & appliances (child)		At cost
HL25	Hearing device repairs (child)		

Telehealth codes for hearing loss services

We've introduced new Telehealth codes for hearing loss service providers from 1 May 2021.

To provide this service you must meet our telehealth criteria and follow the requirements set out in NZ Audiological Society Best Practice Guidelines and the Allied Health Aotearoa New Zealand's best practice guideline. Medical Practitioners must meet the Medical Council of New Zealand's telehealth guidelines. Further information on telehealth can be found on our website here:

<https://www.acc.co.nz/covid-19/providers/telehealth-during-the-covid-19-response/>

Service item codes	Item Description	Price (\$ excl GST)	Price (\$ incl GST)
HL01T	Hearing Loss - Hearing Assessment Report, Telehealth	160.99	185.44
HL02T	Hearing Loss - Trauma Assessment Pre-treatment, Telehealth	111.13	127.80
HL03T	Hearing Loss - Trauma Assessment Post-treatment, Telehealth	160.99	185.14
HL10T	Hearing Loss - Monaural Re-Fitting within one year, Telehealth	311.60	358.34
HL12T	Hearing Loss - Device consultation fee, Telehealth	102.05	117.36
HLBNFFT	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: two new hearing aids, Telehealth	1,142.96	1,314.40
HLBRFFT	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: Re-aid of two aids, Telehealth	1,142.96	1,314.40
HLMNFFT	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: one new hearing aid, Telehealth	832.73	957.64
HLMRFFT	Hearing Loss - Fitting fee: one hearing aid re-aid, Telehealth	832.73	957.64
AUD50T	Hearing Aid fitting monaural - TBI, Telehealth	832.73	957.64
AUD51T	Hearing Aid fitting binaural - TBI, Telehealth	1,142.96	1,314.40
AUD31T	ENT Specialist Report-Initial	Actual & reasonable	

Managing performance

A focus on quality helps our clients get the best outcomes possible from the services you provide. To support this, we have structures in place that ensure your services meet professional standards, as well as our policies, procedures and expectations.

Engagement and Performance

Our Engagement and Performance Managers are a primary point of contact and can provide you with support to help understand our legislation, policies and procedures.

Engagement and Performance Managers may visit you to:

- address any concerns you may have
- monitor performance and provide feedback on any concerns about service provision
- develop, negotiate and implement improvement plans.

Clinical Services Advice

We have many clinically qualified advisors with a range of backgrounds (including audiology) who can answer any clinical queries you have.

Our clinical advisors help support our Engagement and Performance and Integrity Services teams with clinical quality.

Type of support may include:

- visits to you
- reviewing your clinical records
- giving you feedback strengthening your clinical documentation.

Monitoring

From time to time ACC may carry out monitoring activities, e.g. client surveys, analysis of payment or file data. Where possible and appropriate, information relating to either sector and/or your individual results will be provided to you.

Peer reviews

To ensure that we have the best information, we may approach providers within your clinical peer group/profession for advice.

Integrity Services Team

Our Integrity Services team are committed to an evidence-based, prevention-first approach to protect the sustainability of the scheme. Early engagement, data insights and exploratory conversations help make sure we are aligned and working together.

This supports you and all our treatment and rehabilitation providers to deliver the best outcomes for our clients.

We aim to put integrity at the heart of everything we do, with a focus on preventing fraud, abuse and waste. We define these terms as:

- Fraud – deliberate false representation
- Abuse – negligence, or failure to exercise proper duties (including manipulation of policies and procedures)
- Waste – carelessness with regards to following policies and procedures.

CONTACTING INTEGRITY SERVICES

If you have concerns that you believe may require our Integrity Services' attention, please contact the team on 0508 222 372 or via our website acc.co.nz

Keeping your details up to date

To make sure that we have up to date information, contact us if you change your name, postal or email address, or your phone or fax number.

Please also let us know about any change in your practising status (i.e. conditions on practice or suspension of your APC).

You can update your details with us by phoning our Contact Centre on 0800 222 070 or emailing registrations@acc.co.nz (make sure you include your provider number and/or vendor number in the email).

Further information

Our website acc.co.nz has up to date, helpful information on many different areas of ACCs business. Please familiarise yourself with the website and use it as your first point of reference if you have questions that need to be answered.

Contact us

- Our website, www.acc.co.nz
- Contact Centre, call 0800 222 070 (for provider help)
- Hearing loss teams, email:
 - hamilton.hearingloss@acc.co.nz
 - dunedin.hearingloss@acc.co.nz
- Contact Centre, call 0800 101 996 (for claims)
- ACC Principal Audiology Adviser, email AudiologyAdviser@acc.co.nz
- ACC e-business, call 0800 222 994 (select option 1)
- For provider registrations, call 0800 222 070 or email registrations@acc.co.nz

Disclaimer

All information in this publication was correct at the time of printing. This information is intended to serve only as a general guide to arrangements under the Accident Compensation Act 2001 and regulations. For any legal or financial purposes this Act takes precedence over the contents of this guide.