

**Iain Palmer**  
**[fyi-request-3445-9a71c3af@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-3445-9a71c3af@requests.fyi.org.nz)**

Ref: H20150 5706

Dear **Iain Palmer**

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request received on **8 December 2015** under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for the following information:

*Can you please explain why I am being charged what feels like daylight robbery due to the script being from a specialist compared to GP for the same medication.*

Your request is technically refused in reliance of section 18 (e) of the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), on the basis that the information is publicly available.

Decisions about which medicines will be funded are made by the Pharmaceutical Management Agency (PHARMAC). PHARMAC decides if it will fund all or some of the cost of a medicine. In most cases the patient will need to contribute to the cost of their medicines. This contribution is called the pharmaceutical co-payment.

Currently, everyone who is eligible for publicly funded health and disability services should, in most circumstances, pay a \$5 pharmaceutical co-payment. The rest of the cost of the medicine is met by the Government.

However, a higher co-payment of \$10 or \$15 applies to medicines prescribed by private specialists. This is because private health services are not covered by district health board funding. The only time a dental Rx would carry the lower \$5 co-payment is when the dentist is providing DHB-funded services e.g. through a hospital dental clinic. Otherwise they are regarded as non-eligible prescribers.

This information can be found online in a number of locations including:

<http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/primary-health-care/primary-health-care-subsidies-and-services/pharmaceutical-co-payments/questions-and-answers-5-pharmaceutical-co-payments>

<http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/primary-health-care/primary-health-care-subsidies-and-services/pharmaceutical-co-payments>

<http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/visiting-dentist/publicly-funded-dental-care>

<http://centraltas.co.nz/assets/Publications/Pharmacy-Documents/Funding-monitoring-and-processes/Pharmacy-Procedures-Manual/CPS009-Pharmacy-Procedures-Manual-V7.1.pdf>

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to contest the decision to extend the time by seeking an investigation and review of that decision by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsman  
PO Box 10-152  
Wellington 6143

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cathy O'Malley'.

**Cathy O'Malley**  
Deputy Director-General  
**Sector Capability and Implementation**