

About the Sawmill Workers' Service

The Sawmill Workers' Service is based on a free annual health check delivered by a primary health care team in a general practice setting. It includes referrals to other publicly funded services depending on patients' health needs – like referral to smoking cessation programmes, physical activity programmes, nutrition advice, mental health services, and genetic counselling.

The Sawmill Workers' Service is for former sawmill workers who were exposed to pentachlorophenol (PCP) and other hazardous substances at sawmills throughout Aotearoa New Zealand between 1950 –1989. The Sawmill Workers' Service aims to help people stay healthy by supporting the early detection of diseases, promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing modifiable risk factors.

Do I have to determine my patient's eligibility for the Sawmill Workers' Service?

No. Eligibility is based on whether the patient worked in a sawmill that used PCP, how long they worked at a sawmill and whether they are entitled to publicly funded health services in Aotearoa New Zealand.

An individual's eligibility will be determined following an application to the Sawmill Workers' Service. An appeals process is available for unsuccessful applicants.

How will I know if one of my patients is eligible for the Sawmill Workers' Service?

Applicants must provide the name of their health provider with their application. The nominated practitioner for the successful applicant will then be informed in writing by the Secretariat for the Sawmill Workers' Service that the patient is eligible.

Following this, the nominated practitioner will be given information about the Sawmill Workers' Service, including guidance on undertaking the health check and a claim form.

Specific questions about the annual health check

What is the free annual health check?

Eligible individuals are entitled to a free annual health check. The content of each check depends on the patient's medical history, current health needs, and the clinical decisions made by the primary health care team. The free health check generally involves:

- Talking about PCP and dioxin exposure, the health effects, and the patient's exposure.
- Talking about the patient's health and providing brief advice on staying healthy.
- Considering whether the patient has any symptoms associated with PCP or dioxin exposure and completing a physical examination if necessary.
- Discussing any mental health concerns the patient may have.
- Considering whether to refer the patient to Green Prescription programmes, nutrition services, smoking cessation, mental health or genetic counselling.

More information on conducting a health check in the Service is contained in the guidance for health providers: ***Undertaking Health Checks in the Sawmill Workers' Service***.

Will the first health check be the same as subsequent annual checks?

The content of each health check depends on the health needs of the individual, good clinical practice, and the clinical judgement of the primary health care team. Some patients will receive similar checks each year while others will get different checks.

Who should deliver the annual health check?

The annual health check is delivered by a primary care team in a general practice setting. The primary care team will need to decide who should be involved and how. This may include a general practitioner, nurse practitioner or other primary care practitioners within the team.

What is the service fee for the annual health check?

The fee for the first health check is \$220 (GST excl) per health check per person. The fee for the second and all subsequent annual health check is \$75 (GST excl) per health check per person.

No other fee or co-payment can be charged to the patient.

Are laboratory or pharmaceutical costs included in the service fee?

No. Any diagnostic tests or treatment/management services referred from the health check are publicly funded as normal.

How do I claim the service fee for the annual health check?

Health providers can invoice the Sawmill Workers' Service directly for all annual health check payments. Please email all invoices to hss@allenandclarke.co.nz and address all invoices to:

Sawmill Workers' Service
PO Box 10730
Wellington 6143.

What information do I need to provide to invoice Health New Zealand?

Please include all the information requested below on each invoice.

Health New Zealand requires that you provide the following information when seeking payment for the health check:

- Full name of the patient
- Patient NHI
- Patient's date of birth
- Date and duration of the health check
- Practice PHO
- Health support service components that the patient was referred to
- Name of the general practice
- Name and registration details of the health practitioner delivering the health check.

This information is collected by the Sawmill Workers' Service and must be provided before payment can be made.

Please do not send Health New Zealand any of the patient's medical history. This should be kept between with the patient and the health provider.

Specific questions about the referred services

What services can I refer a patient to?

You can refer your patient to the following services if they are available in your area:

- The Green Prescription programme or other physical activity programmes
- Dietician and nutrition services
- Smoking cessation and support services to modify risky drinking behaviours
- Primary mental health services
- Genetic counselling.

How do I refer a patient to these services?

As patients will be accessing existing local services, you will need to consider the referral guidelines and processes of each specific programme.

Will there be cost to the patient for referral?

Patients pay the usual cost to access referred services. In many cases, these services are free or offered at low or very low cost. Genetic counselling services are free.

Getting more information

You can get more information about PCP exposure, its health effects, and the Sawmill Workers' Service from Health New Zealand website. This includes information for eligible patients and other interested individuals.

General information about the Sawmill Workers' Service and about PCP exposure and health effects has also been provided to eligible individuals as part of their eligibility pack.

Contact details

Sawmill Workers' Service

PO Box 10730

Wellington 6143

Email: hss@allenandclarke.co.nz

Telephone: 0800 288 588

Website: www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/dioxins

Specific technical questions can be directed to 0800 288 588 or hss@allenandclarke.co.nz. We will forward to the appropriate expert for response and expect to return a response to you within five working days.

Please do not send Health New Zealand or the Health Support Services any medical records. These should be kept between the health provider and the patient.