

Changes to the way ACC funds hearing aids

23 November 2010

On 23 November 2010, ACC announced that they are making some changes to the way they fund hearing aids. The changes will take effect from **1 January 2011**. To view the media release, go to www.beehive.govt.nz/release/hearing+aid+costs+be+apportioned

What does this mean for people funded by the Ministry of Health?

If your hearing loss has **not** been caused by accident, treatment injury, or noise exposure at work (occupational noise-induced hearing loss) then there will be no change to the existing processes. This process is:

- You have an assessment by an Audiologist
- If you need hearing aids, the Audiologist sends an application to Enable New Zealand or Accessable for either hearing aids or the hearing aid subsidy
- Enable New Zealand or Accessable process your application
- Funding towards your hearing aid(s) is approved.

Please note, in most cases, the Ministry of Health does not cover the cost of fitting fees.

If you think your hearing loss has been caused either fully or in part by accident, treatment injury, or noise exposure at work (occupational noise-induced hearing loss), then funding for hearing aids will be administered through ACC. From 1 January 2011, this process will be:

- You visit your GP, who will lodge a claim with ACC for you
- You will have an independent assessment by an audiologist and an ear, nose, and throat (ENT) specialist to determine the cause(s) of your hearing loss
- If you need hearing services, ACC will allocate funding depending on your mix of injury and non-injury hearing loss.

If you have a combination of injury and non-injury related hearing loss, ACC will work out how much they pay and how much the Ministry of Health will pay. They will also allocate this funding on behalf of the Ministry of Health. You will not have to go to the Ministry of Health as well or have a second assessment.

The Ministry of Health has two different levels of funding for hearing aids. If you qualify for the higher level of funding (the wholesale price of a hearing aid(s)), you should discuss with your Audiologists whether it would be best for you to receive funding from either ACC or the Ministry of Health. You cannot receive the higher level of funding from the Ministry of Health as well as getting a contribution from ACC.

For more information about how this joint funding will work go to www.acc.co.nz/news/WPC089881 where a questions and answers sheet is also available.

For general information about the types of services you can get if you or your child have difficulty hearing, go to the Ministry of Health [disability information pages](#).