

Media Release

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Attention: Education, Health
and Political reporters
For Immediate Use**

Medical & Dentistry review must reduce fees

The New Zealand University Students' Association (NZUSA) stated today that the upcoming medical and dentistry funding review must address the extraordinarily high level of fees for those courses.

"NZUSA is happy that Michael Cullen is looking at reviewing the funding arrangements for medical and dentistry courses, however he must ensure that action is taken to significantly reduce the enormous costs incurred by students," said Conor Roberts, Co-president of NZUSA.

"Medical students face significant fees, with courses costing on average \$11,000 per year and graduates owing on average \$65,000 when they finish."

"New Zealand is short of doctors and dentists because high fees turn potential students away from a medical course of study or drive them overseas once they finish, the funding review must address these problems" said Mr Roberts.

The funding review comes on the back of an article published in the New Zealand Medical Journal by the New Zealand Medical Association stating that the Government needs to find ways to reduce fees for medical students as student debt is destroying New Zealand's medical workforce.

"Increasing public investment in public tertiary institutions is one of the best ways of bringing fees down and supporting this vital group of students," said Joey Randall, Co-president of NZUSA.

"Our research shows that the huge cost associated with studying for a medical degree results in 88% of students with a student loan reporting that they experience increased stress levels because of the size of their debt, 42% said debt had influenced their decision when and whether to have children, and nearly two thirds stated they would consider leaving New Zealand within three years of graduating."

"Dealing with high fees will mean dealing with these issues. The review of medical and dentistry funding must focus on bringing high fees down" Mr Randall concluded.

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