

Hardship Fund

A programme by **WellSouth**



Last updated: 30/05/2025

Intended Purpose:

This programme provides limited funding to support people facing financial hardship and in clinical need to access primary care that they otherwise couldn't afford. Practices/providers have the discretion to allocate this funding as they see fit, subject to these conditions.

Eligibility:

- Patient has financial barriers that are preventing access to primary healthcare

AND

- has clinical need

AND

- is eligible for New Zealand-funded healthcare

Exclusions:

Funding **cannot** be used :

- For existing debt
- For secondary or dental care
- For any patient residing permanently in an aged residential care (ARC) facility
- If other government funding streams are available.

Any ineligible use will trigger follow-up by WellSouth.

Guidelines for Use:

Funding is to be used for:

- Costs that are reasonable and directly support access to primary healthcare
- Circumstances which are limited in time

Funding can be used for:

- Enrolled and unenrolled people
- Those who do not meet the criteria for other WellSouth-funded programmes, but require support due to exceptional circumstances.
- In combination with other WellSouth funded programmes (e.g. WellSouth vouchers may be used for the same episode of care).

For example:

- In-practice test costs
- Co-payments, script or pharmacy fees
- Transport costs associated with primary care
- Repeat visits for the same issue are allowed (e.g. wound care).

Reporting

Record your use of the funding in the Hardship Fund form within the month to permit review by the Primary Care Network Team and the Equity Team against the Eligibility, Exclusions, and Guidelines for Use.

We will review whether your use of the programme is supporting WellSouth's equity objectives.

There are no service codes.

Payment Rates

Practices/providers determine how much of the funding allocated to them under this programme they spend on each person.

This is a one-off grant, with no top-ups available.

Can a co-payment be charged?

Yes, a co-payment can be charged.