

16 March 2019

Ms Jodie Yorke
Program Lead
Provider Regulation and Support
ReturnToWorkSA

Email: providers@rtwsa.com

Dear Ms Yorke

Re: Proposed Audiology fees for 2019-20

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on ReturnToWorkSA's (RTWSA) proposed Audiology fees for 2019-20, effective 1 July 2019.

We note that the *Return to Work Act 2014 (SA)* requires RTWSA to set fees based on the average charge to private patients for the relevant service as reflected in Medicare data.

Audiology Australia welcomes and supports the 0.6% proposed increase to hourly audiology service fees for 2019-20 based on the 0.6% increase in the average private charge.

However, we note that RTWSA has not proposed a fee review in regards to hearing products or devices. As noted in our submission to RTWSA last year on the draft Audiology Policy and Fee Schedule, South Australian members of Audiology Australia were of the view that the fees for the supply and fitting of hearing aids in the Fee Schedule were too low and did not adequately cover the time and resources involved in fitting devices, including coaching/counselling the client about outcomes and their expectations.

For instance, not all clients will require multiple subsequent appointments once they have been fitted with a hearing device. However, if a client does require several appointments to enable their device/s to be set up appropriately for their hearing health care needs in the first year – it is reasonable and appropriate that the provider should be compensated for the extra time/appointments that they provide to workers.

On this basis, we request that RTWSA undertakes a review of current RTWSA fees for hearing products and devices with a view to ensuring that they appropriately reflect the time and resources spent by hearing service providers in fitting devices to RTWSA clients and providing expert follow-up.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter further, please contact Audiology Australia's Research and Policy Manager Elissa Campbell at elissa.campbell@audiology.asn.au.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jessica Vitkovic
President
Audiology Australia