



New Zealand’s Healthcare Costs Projected to Rise 18 Percent in 2026, Significantly Outpacing Global Average: Aon Report

AUCKLAND, Dec. 4 2025 – [Aon plc](#) (NYSE: AON), a leading global professional services firm, released the New Zealand findings from its [2026 Global Medical Trend Rates Report](#). The report projects that employee medical plan costs in New Zealand could rise by 18 percent in 2026, up from 17 percent projected for 2025.* This marks a faster rate of growth compared to Asia Pacific’s regional average of 11.3 percent and the global average of 9.8 percent for 2026.

Medical trend rates represent the annual percentage increase in medical plan costs per employee, both insured and self-insured. These figures help organisations budget and adapt their benefits strategies to ensure sustainability in a rapidly evolving healthcare landscape.

Forecasted Medical Trend Rate from 2025 to 2026

	2025	2026
Global	10 %	9.8 %
Asia Pacific	11.1 %	11.3 %
New Zealand	17 %	18 %

Key Drivers of Rising Healthcare Costs in New Zealand

New Zealand’s medical trend rate is being driven by several factors, including an ageing population, a growing burden of chronic diseases, increased healthcare utilisation (driven by delays in the public health system between 2023 - 2025) and the adoption of advanced medical technologies. The top medical conditions expected to influence costs in 2026 remain consistent with previous years: cardiovascular diseases, cancer, hypertension, diabetes and musculoskeletal issues.

Proactive Employer Strategies in a Universal Healthcare System

While New Zealand’s universal healthcare system provides a strong foundation for public health, employers play a vital role in supporting workforce wellbeing and managing supplementary medical plan costs. Leading organisations are taking proactive steps to foster a healthier, more resilient workforce, including:

- **Preventive Health and Wellbeing Initiatives:** Implementing wellness programs focused on physical activity, nutrition, mental health and stress management; providing regular health screenings and vaccination drives for employees.
- **Mental Health Support:** Providing employee assistance programs, mental health days and workplace training to promote mental wellbeing.
- **Digital Health and Telemedicine:** Subsidising telehealth services and digital tools for convenient access to care and health tracking.



- **Healthy Work Environment:** Investing in ergonomic workstations, providing healthy food options and encouraging movement throughout the workday.

Employers are increasingly leveraging data-driven insights to identify health trends within their workforce, enabling them to target interventions more effectively and measure the impact of their wellbeing initiatives.

“New Zealand’s exceptionally high medical trend rate signals a pivotal moment for employers,” said Anson Davies, head of Health Solutions, New Zealand for Aon. “While universal healthcare provides a strong safety net, the sharp rise in supplementary medical costs highlight the need for a more holistic approach to workforce wellbeing. Employers who invest in preventive health and mental health support are not only managing costs — they’re building a healthier, more engaged and resilient workforce ready to meet tomorrow’s challenges.”

Read Aon’s 2026 Global Medical Trend Rate Report [here](#).

**Some larger groups are experiencing plan costs lower than listed above and we acknowledge that these are averages and don’t apply to all employer groups.*

About the Report

The 2026 Global Medical Trend Rates Report is based on insights from over 100 Aon offices that broker, administer or advise on employer-sponsored medical plans. The findings reflect the expectations of Aon professionals based on their interactions with clients and carriers across the region.

About Aon

[Aon plc](#) (NYSE: AON) exists to shape decisions for the better — to protect and enrich the lives of people around the world. Through actionable analytic insight, globally integrated Risk Capital and Human Capital expertise, and locally relevant solutions, our colleagues provide clients in over 120 countries with the clarity and confidence to make better risk and people decisions that protect and grow their businesses.

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