

### A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The much-loved Physio Pool had to close in May 2021 because of equipment breakdown. It had provided hydrotherapy services to Dunedin for almost 80 years. The facility requires substantial investment to re-open.

The facility is owned by Te Whatu Ora but has been operated by the Otago Therapeutic Pool Trust for almost 40 years as a public swimming pool. More information can be found here: [physiopool.org.nz](https://physiopool.org.nz)

The Trust is working with Te Whatu Ora and the DCC on a feasibility project to look at options either to redevelop the existing pool or to consider a replacement facility. The feasibility work is being funded by Lotteries.

#### The feasibility study will consider:

- » **A full redevelopment option lasting 30+ years**
- » **Two replacement options:**
  - **A like-for-like replacement option – an accessible hydrotherapy pool with changing spaces**
  - **An enhanced replacement option – as above, but with additional facilities, such as a sauna, steam room, spa pool, physiotherapy services and an accessible gym space**

The Trust has funding to consider operating models and complete high level public consultation on the options outlined above. The Trust has appointed Feldspar Associates as project manager and pool design specialists, Architecture HDT and Powell Fenwick, and other consultants to form the project consultant team.

### B. DEMAND BACKGROUND

Since 1946, the Physio Pool has provided an essential community service, particularly for older people, people with disabilities and those with long term health and mobility difficulties. For almost 40 years the Physio Pool has been a public swimming pool.

A 2023 assessment of swimming pool provision in Dunedin, (completed by recreation consultants Xyst), identified the Physio Pool as being pivotal in continuing to provide hydrotherapy and swimming facilities, given the city's aging population. This report also saw the Physio Pool as key to reducing pressure on Dunedin's Moana pool complex, which is highly oversubscribed.

At the same time, information provided by Enterprise Dunedin (from Fresh Info) identified wellness tourism, (and hot pools and spa facilities in particular), as being a major economic draw and growth area for the region.

### C. OPTIONS FOR THE EXISTING PHYSIO POOL

This year, the consultant team has been working with Te Whatu Ora to complete conditions assessment work to see what the options are for the existing Physio Pool. The conditions assessment work has included:

- » A full survey of the building and its services by the specialist pool consultant team
- » Heritage assessment work
- » Fire report
- » Detailed seismic assessment
- » Resource planning advice

As a result, the consultant team have completed a full redevelopment option for consideration, which is currently being priced.

Alongside this, discussions have been held with Te Whatu Ora around its long-term requirements for the site. For the full development option, however, several factors must be taken into consideration. These include the substantial investment required to update and replace water heating equipment, the unavailability of on-site accessible parking, and potential long-term access restrictions due to the hospital site masterplan.



## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Please complete the survey to show community support for hydrotherapy facilities in Dunedin

### D. OPTIONS FOR A REPLACEMENT FACILITY

As outlined, the project's Lotteries funding provides for the exploration of options to create a replacement facility.

To examine the costs of building a new facility against the cost of full redevelopment, the consultant team will consider a like-for-like replacement facility. The consultant team is developing a sketch option for a replacement based on the size and specification of the existing pool.

At the same time, the consultant team will consider the option of an enhanced hydrotherapy facility, with additional facilities and services, to see if this would improve the long-term financial sustainability of a replacement pool.

The idea with this second option is to create a sustainable income stream for hydrotherapy facilities in Dunedin, a destination which would attract tourists and locals alike. The consultant team would like to see if it is possible to replicate the success of similar projects elsewhere in New Zealand.

### E. OPERATING FRAMEWORK

Alongside consideration of the redevelopment and replacement options, the consultant team will explore operating options at a high level.

The costs of heating pool water to a temperature suitable for hydrotherapy are significant and this will strongly influence the selection of the preferred option and the recommended operating model.

### F. THE TRUST NEEDS YOUR HELP!

**The Trust needs to demonstrate community support from organisations and individuals for hydrotherapy facilities in Dunedin to move the project on to the next stage.**

The Trust would be grateful if you could spare some time either to complete a survey on behalf of your organisation, or to send a message of support.

### LINK TO SURVEY

QR code below or visit:

[surveymonkey.com/r/dunedin-physio-pool](https://surveymonkey.com/r/dunedin-physio-pool)



Email address for message of support:

[dunedinphysiopool@gmail.com](mailto:dunedinphysiopool@gmail.com)

# PhysioPool

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