



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL  
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

**MSC  
NEWS**

## TE HEAMANA|FROM THE CHAIR

Tēnā koutou katoa

As we move into the holiday period, and a well-deserved break for most practitioners, we can look back on what's been a very full year of activities.

Council members attended scientific meetings and conferences at the invitation of NZIMLS, NZHSOA and NZATS\*. The benefit of this was being able to meet and discuss matters of concern with practitioners, whilst continuing to develop positive relationships with the professional associations. Being able to engage directly can result in better decision-making regarding our regulatory functions.

*\* NZIMLS| New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science NZHSOA | New Zealand Hospitals Scientific Officers Association | NZATS – New Zealand Anaesthetic Technicians' Society*

It's been a full year for the Council with the arrival of our new Chief Executive Dr Sue Calvert, who's hit the ground running - planning and implementing consultations on scopes of practice, successfully concluding the consultation on the Anaesthetic Technology scope of practice. Lessons learned from this activity, combined with valuable insights gleaned from a hui with Medical Laboratory Science stakeholders, means we're ready for the 2024 Medical Laboratory Science consultation.

Finally, thank you to those practitioners working through the holiday period, allowing the rest of us to spend a much-deserved rest with friends and family.

Ngā mihi mō ngā tau kei mua i te aroaro.

Good luck for the future everyone.

Ngā mihi

Brett Besley  
MSC Chair

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## COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY

*The primary responsibility of the Council is to protect the health and safety of the New Zealand public by ensuring practitioners registered with the Council are competent and fit to practise.*

## *Message from the Chief Executive*

Kia ora koutou

As the summer holiday period approaches, I've reflected on what's been a successful year for the Medical Sciences Council (the Council).

Te Ama Tōtika (formerly the MSC Māori Practitioners Advisory Committee) has been instrumental in providing the Council with advice and direction on work to ensure practitioners have competencies that will enable effective engagement with Māori. I've enjoyed our meetings with this rōpū immensely and acknowledge the value and insights presented in discussion. Next year will be very busy as their workplan progresses. In the meantime, the Council is considering how it can enable further kōrero and collaboration between members of the Māori Medical Laboratory Science and Anaesthetic Technician workforce.

Consultation on the anaesthetic technician scope of practice provided the Council with a sound position to make change. An expert advisory group met last week in Wellington to progress this work. This group includes representatives from clinical practice, education, the professional association, a Māori practitioner and a lay person. They've been charged with providing the Council with a final scope of practice statement and a review of the competency standards. These will be evidence-informed documents. Members of the anaesthetic technician profession are encouraged to continue their participation in this project as there's further consultation with the sector in 2024.

While the review of the scope of practice for Medical Laboratory Practitioners paused in 2023, this project recommences in 2024. The Council has agreed to appoint an expert advisory group for this work. Members will be appointed through expressions of interest.

Our Medical Sciences Secretariat (MSS) staff are busy registering Aotearoa New Zealand graduates. Starting a career as a health professional is exciting and rewarding. These graduates enter the workforce having completed accredited programmes of education here in Aotearoa. They have the knowledge and skills to ensure safe and effective care for whānau. We wish them well in their chosen career and encourage them to ensure that from a regulatory perspective they know and understand their professional obligations. Practitioners should not hesitate to contact the Medical Sciences Council (MSC) offices if they have any questions.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who supported me in my new role as Chief Executive for the MSC. This has been an immensely positive year, I've made many new connections and learnt a lot about different areas of clinical practice. Other highlights have included the support work and development the Council and staff of MSS have participated in around cultural development, such as education on Te Reo Māori, Allyship and Governance.

I also want to acknowledge the Council, the MSS staff, and all the key stakeholders who've worked with me to ensure a successful 2023.

Have a safe festive season and I look forward to continuing our mahi in 2024.

Dr Susan Calvert | Chief Executive

## Update from Te Ama Tōtika - formerly MPAC

We're pleased to have started this mahi on behalf of the Medical Sciences Council (MSC).

We've renamed the committee from Māori Practitioners Advisory Committee (MPAC) to Te Ama Tōtika. Ama is the balance beam either side of the waka that provides stability, and tōtika is to advance - go straight and have the courage to be bold. The new name encompasses leadership, wairua and engagement as we navigate this journey. Te Ama Tōtika reflects our purpose as a rōpū in guiding and stabilising the waka that is the MSC and its practitioners.

So far we've provided in-depth recommendations to the following documents:

- Perioperative Scope of Practice Policy and Guidelines
- Anaesthetic Technician Scope of Practice, along with Policy and Guidelines
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for recertification of Medical Laboratory Science Practitioners.

We've thoroughly enjoyed working together as a team, reviewing these documents, and providing advice through our unique lens. We hope to engage with other practitioners to help strengthen the quality of engagement and networking amongst each other.

*'Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi' - With your basket and my basket, the people will live (Hei, 2023, para. 5).*

Chelsey Loader, Chair  
Te Ama Tōtika

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## Newly qualified practitioners

### Congratulations and welcome...

to all the newly qualified practitioners entering the Register. Don't forget to check the [website](#) for important information.

For example, dates/when you need to get things done, such as the last days you can submit your registration application or apply for your practising certificate.

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## Annual Practising Certificate (APC)

### Renewal period

The APC renewal period will run from mid-February to 31 March 2024. We'll confirm the exact date closer to the time.

For more about the APC and fees go to the Medical Sciences Council website:

- [what you need to practise as a medical laboratory science practitioner or anaesthetic technician in New Zealand](#)
- Fees for the anaesthetic technology and medical laboratory science profession – refer [Gazette Notices](#)

## ***Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand – Voluntary Bonding Scheme 2024***

The Voluntary Bonding Scheme (the Scheme) is a practical initiative run by Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand. It encourages newly qualified health professionals to work in our communities and specialties that need them the most. And it helps retain those people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Those people on the scheme can receive payments to help repay student loans (or increase their ‘take home’ income if they don’t have a student loan).

### **Entry criteria you’ll need to meet**



Anaesthetic Technicians who completed undergraduate studies as an Anaesthetic Technician in 2021, 2022 or 2023, and intend working at 0.6FTE or more for a public sector employer hospital role for at least three and up to five years, you may be eligible to register for the 2024 intake of the Scheme (with bonds starting 1 January 2024 at the earliest).

If your registration is accepted and you meet the criteria a bond payment of \$11,796 (after tax) is available after completing a minimum of three years’ service, and up to two additional payments of \$3,932 after a fourth year and fifth year.

### **When to register and how**

The six-week registration of interest period for the Scheme’s 2024 will likely open in February 2024 – you’ll do this by completing an online form available on the [Te Whatu Ora website](#). You’ll also find more information about the Scheme there.

### **Important reminder**

Registrations for the 2024 intake must be received within the six-week Registration of Interest period – late registrations cannot be considered.

[The Voluntary Bonding Scheme 2024 intake information – Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand](#)

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### ***Fees consultation***

During November, the Medical Sciences Council (the Council) consulted with practitioners about a potential increase in service fees (the consultation closed 4 December 2023).

Thank you to those who were able to contribute – that information is now being reviewed and the Council will advise practitioners of the outcome, and any changes to fees, in the New Zealand Gazette. We’ll also include an update in the next issue of this newsletter in 2024.

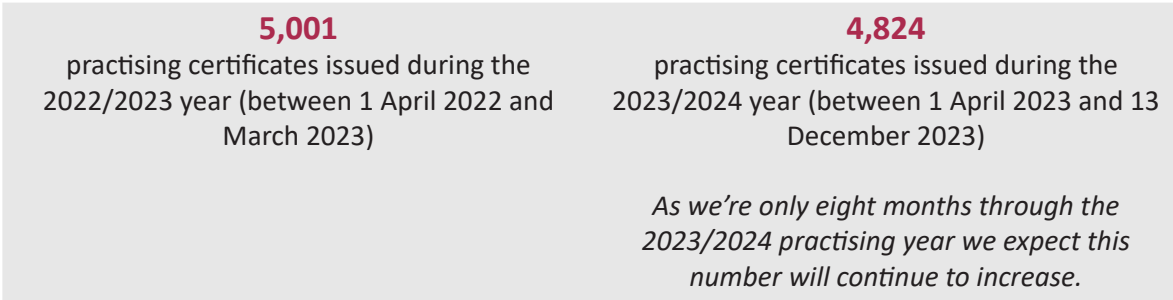
As a reminder, here are the proposed changes discussed in the consultation:

- An increase in all fees including that paid for a practising certificate. For anaesthetic technician practitioners this will mean an increase in the practising certificate fee from \$374.90 to \$450.00. For medical laboratory science practitioners an increase from \$282.20 to \$339.00.
- Removal of a reduced practising certificate fee for practitioners who apply for a practising certificate after 30 September.
- Introduction of a reduced practising certificate fee for new graduates entering the Register and applying for their first practising certificate between December – March each year for the current practising year.
- Introduction of a disciplinary levy.

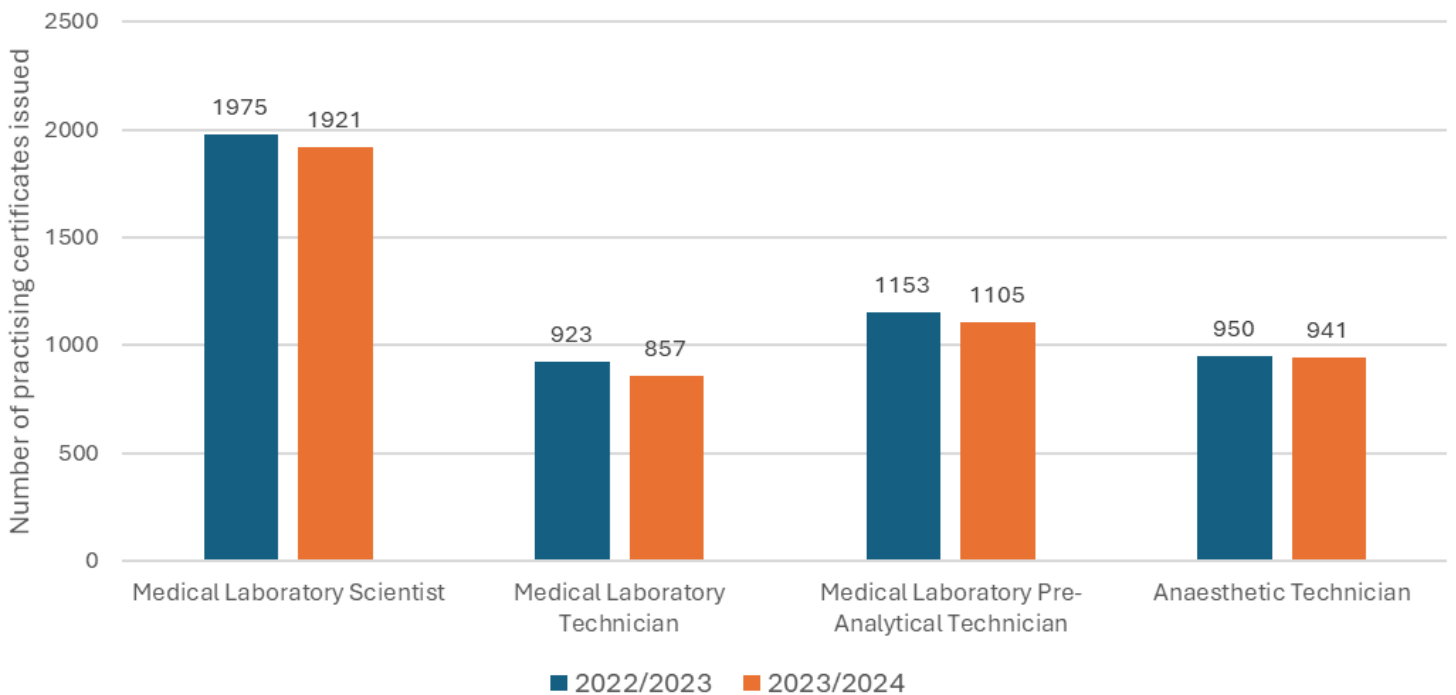
For more about this view information on the Medical Sciences Council website under [Consultation Practitioner Fees](#).

## Statistics

### 4,824 MSC practising certificates issued



Number of practising certificates issued 2022-2023 compared to 2023-2024



## Registration applications approved

We've approved more applications from Aotearoa | NZ graduates than internationally qualified practitioners so far in the 2023/2024 practising year.

**216**

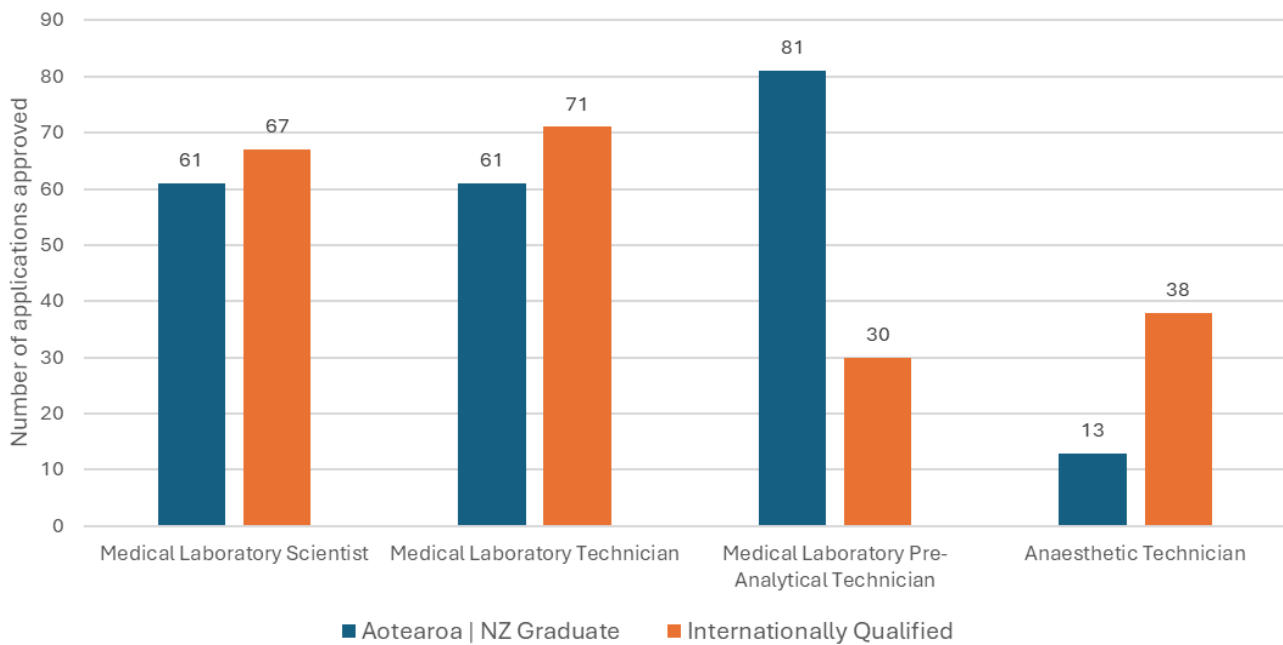
**Aotearoa | New Zealand Graduate** applications approved between 1 April 2023 and 13 December 2023

**206**

**Internationally qualified** practitioners approved between 1 April 2023 and 13 December 2023

*As we're only eight months through the 2023/2024 practising year we expect the number of approved applications for both Aotearoa | New Zealand graduates and internationally qualified practitioners will continue to increase.*

Number of applications approved to date in 2023-2024 by country educated



## Taking a break - MSS office closed

The Medical Sciences Secretariat office will be closed for the holiday period -

**from 12 noon, Friday 22 December 2023  
to 8:30am Monday 8 January 2024**