



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

**MSC
NEWS**

TE HEAMANA|FROM THE CHAIR

Tēnā koutou katoa

It is a good change to be able to greet everyone in the new year without a backdrop of pandemic or weather-related calamity. I sincerely hope that the new year has started well for those of you who managed a break, and that those who 'held the fort' either have or are about to embark on a well-deserved rest.

As we get into the swing of this new year, the Council has several projects planned for 2024 – following the successful Anaesthetic Technician Scope of Practice (AT SOP) review, and the massive amount of feedback, we're looking to gazette the resulting scope shortly. This will then allow us to resume work on the scope review for Medical Laboratory Science. We look forward to engaging with practitioners and professionals to progress this important piece of work.

The Council would also like to acknowledge the upcoming exit examination for vocationally trained anaesthetic technicians. This will be the final group to sit this format of examination before it is retired. For many of us, it has been a rite of passage, and the source of many 'campfire' stories of success and near misses. Over the years it has served the profession well and this is in great part due to the many volunteer hours put in by New Zealand Anaesthetic Technicians' Society examiners – thank you all, your efforts have been a credit to your profession.

Keeping in mind the increased work pressures in the healthcare sector, it's still important for practitioners to renew their Annual Practising Certificates (APCs) in a timely manner to reduce any potential stress later.

Ngā mihi

Brett Besley
MSC Chair

CONTENT INCLUDES

From the Chief Executive: Sue Calvert - APC renewal reminder: make sure you've got your APC by 26 March - Board updates: roles confirmed - Cultural competence and safety: what it means and continued professional development - General: Annual Report 2023 - Roles to fill

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 mentioned by the Chair, work has progressed significantly on the scope of practice for anaesthetic technicians. An expert advisory group (EAG) met in December and provided advice to the Council at its February meeting around the scope and qualification. The advisory group is currently working on the Standards of Competence and we will be consulting with the sector around this in the near future.

The EAG has been provided with advice from Te Ama Tōtika the Māori Practitioners Advisory Committee.

Following last year's consultation on the Anaesthetic Technician Scope of Practice you would have received the results in an email. If not an update on the outcome may be found [here](#).

Thank you also to those practitioners who took the time to provide feedback to our naming policy consultation. Amendments have been made and the new policy will appear on our website soon. The decision to name a practitioner is not one that is made lightly so it is vital that there's a robust policy and process to inform decisions.

Finally, it wouldn't be the start of the year without reminding you all that the APC round has started. Please ensure that you apply, pay, and have your certificate before 26 March 2024.

While APC renewals are open until 31 March 2024, please be mindful that you must have your certificate before that date (not just put in your application). And with a public holiday falling on Friday 29 March (plus a weekend on 30/31 March) practitioners (and employers paying fees using the bulk funding method) should plan to have paid/received APCs by 26 March at the latest – this allows a few days for the Finance team to process payments (which is required to issue the APC).

With nearly 10,000 APCs to process, staff are working hard, so we recommend you allow at least five working days for that to happen – don't leave it to the last week.

Dr Susan Calvert | **Chief Executive**

APC Renewal Reminder

It's that time of the year again when registered practitioners must obtain an Annual Practising Certificate (APC). This process runs for about six weeks, ending on 31 March – by which time everyone needs to make sure they have their APC.

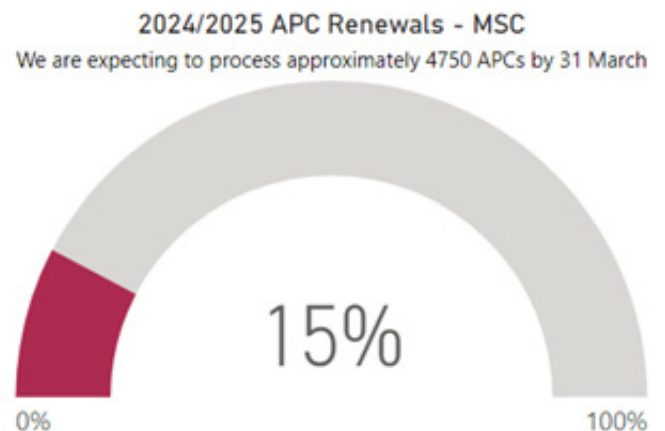
In fact, 26 March is 'the' final date, when you should have applied, paid for and received your certificate, as 29 March is a public holiday (Easter/Good Friday), 30/31 March is a weekend and the Finance team need a few days to process payments, which is required to issue the APC.

Please make a plan to get your APC by 26 March

There's [information on the website about APCs](#): what it is, why you need a current one to legally practice/work in Aotearoa | New Zealand, how to apply for your APC, pay and receive it; including information about how employers can use the 'bulk funding' method to pay APC fees for several practitioners at a time (if that's what they have agreed to). As a reminder: the APC fee and the disciplinary levy must be paid together.

It's a big job

It's a busy time for the Medical Sciences Secretariat who manage the processing of APCs for the Council, so if you have any queries about this, we recommend you check the website first as you're likely to find the information you need there. The team processing your APC request may not respond on the same day (they're processing approximately 10,000 requests) so please be patient. There's also a list of [FAQs](#) on the website that you may find helpful.



Website updates

In February a number of **Yahoo.com** users experienced difficulty receiving email from the Council. This was due to Microsoft issues. The problem has since been resolved, but if it ever happens again, please get in touch with us via msc@medsci.co.nz to provide an alternative email address.

People

Earlier this month a couple of changes happened with the Council member roles.

- Brett Besley was re-appointed as the Council Chair
- Ruth Beeston was appointed as the Deputy Chair.

MSS Board of Directors

Brett Besley, Nicola Swain and Erolia Rooney remain on the Board of Directors for the Medical Sciences Secretariat (the Secretariat).

The Secretariat manages all business support services on behalf of the Medical Sciences Council (the Council) – they're responsible for managing practitioner registrations, processing annual practising certificates and a lot more besides.



Medical Sciences Secretariat (MSS/the Secretariat)

We're pleased to confirm a number of vacant Secretariat roles have recently been filled including Project Manager, Communications Lead, Office Administrator, Deputy Registrar (starting next month) and Education Advisor. Dr Anna Wiles has been appointed as a professional advisor focusing on the education portfolio - she is a medical laboratory scientist.

You can view the full list of Council staff (operating as the Medical Sciences Secretariat) on the MSC website under [Council staff](#). And for more about what the Secretariat does, view details in the [MSC Annual Report 2022](#).

Speaking of annual reports...

The Council/MS Annual Report 2023 has been prepared – we're just waiting on final approval from the auditors to confirm that our accounts can be added. This is a normal part of the annual report process but this year there have been some delays that are outside of our control.

We'll let you know when the report is available to view on the website.

Roles to fill

Manatū Hauora Ministry of Health are currently advertising for practitioners and lay people to be appointed to the Council. At this time they're seeking an anaesthetic technician and a lay person. These roles have been advertised on [NZ Govt Jobs](#) and <https://careers.health.govt.nz/jobs/MOH-1779052> - applications close 4 March. Please share this information with your networks.

Seeking health practitioners and lay people

The Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauora is currently seeking candidates to be considered for health practitioner and lay people members on the [New Zealand Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal | Taraipuinara Whakatika Kaimahi Hauora](#).

The advertisement can be found at:

<https://careers.health.govt.nz/jobs/MOH-1780308>

In this instance, the Ministry of Health is seeking applications/nominations for the following positions:

- 5x medical laboratory technicians
- 6x chiropractors
- 5x physiotherapists
- 5x dental technicians
- 3x dispensing opticians
- 7x lay people.

Preferred skills and attributes for health practitioner and lay people roles include:

- experience and knowledge of te ao Māori and tikanga Māori
- be familiar with, or have some knowledge of the relevant legislation
- keen judgement, particularly the ability to analyse and evaluate evidence.

Seeking health practitioners and lay people cont.,

Any pātai (questions) can be forwarded to the Ministry's appointments team at appointments@health.govt.nz. The application closing date is Monday 4 March 2024.

All applications require a cover letter, CV and completed declaration form (attached to the advertisement). MoH encourages all applicants to apply via their [website](#) in the first instance.

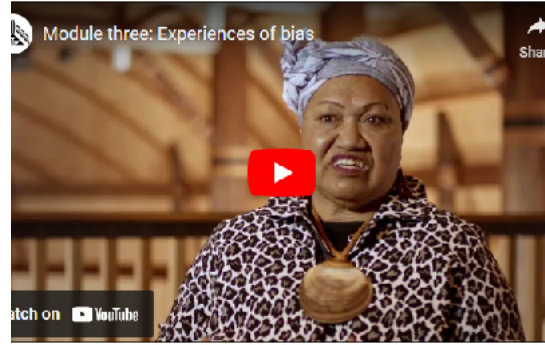
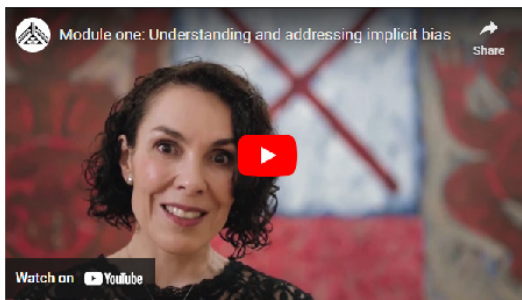
Cultural competence and safety

Under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance (Act) 2003 (the Act) the Council is mandated to set the standards for cultural competence to be observed by medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners.

So, what does 'cultural competence' mean?

Cultural competence is the way registered practitioners consciously engage through interaction and response to patients, to get the maximum health gains for people from different cultural backgrounds.

Practitioners acknowledge the importance of cultural understanding to achieve effective communication and are self-aware of the potential impact of their unconscious bias. If you can make time we recommend you view the [HQSC unconscious bias videos](#) as they explain this in more detail. When you go to HQSC click on [Learning and education modules on understanding bias in health care](#).



Things to consider: cultural, linguistic and migration issues around health activity, knowledge and choices; differing perceptions about health and the role of medical laboratory science or anaesthetic technology; understand intergenerational differences with respect to attitudes to health services and interacting with health professionals.

Ensuring there's cultural competence applied to everything we do puts us in line with who we are as a culturally diverse society. As such, practitioners are in a unique position to demonstrate that every day with patients when performing their work.

Policy and guidelines on cultural competence

You can read more about this in the Cultural Competence policy and guidelines document on the website [here](#).

The Council and Te Ama Tōtika will be working on revising the Standards during 2024.

Continued professional development

Under the Act the Council has a duty to recognise, accredit and set programmes to ensure the ongoing competence of health practitioners, and to promote education and training in the profession.

All registered medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners are required to engage in Continued Professional Development (CPD).

Support from provider organisations

There's also information on the website about [Standards for Accredited CPD Programme Providers](#) – this describes the accreditation standards for provider organisations aimed at supporting ongoing competence and performance for health practitioners.