

Notice of Scope of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications for the Practice of Perioperative Practice in Aotearoa | New Zealand

Commencement

This notice is given pursuant to sections 11 and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 and comes into effect on Monday 8 April 2024. On that date, it replaces the previous notice (published in the New Zealand Gazette, 10 April 2014, gs2800) issued by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand | Te Kaunihera Pūtaiao Hauora o Aotearoa (the Council) regarding the profession of Perioperative Practice (Anaesthetic Technology).

Introduction

Under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, the Council is required to define the practice of Perioperative Practice in Aotearoa | New Zealand. Perioperative practitioners seeking to practice in Aotearoa | New Zealand must be registered with the Council and hold a current practising certificate as required by the Act.

Practice and Profession of Perioperative Practitioners

Perioperative practitioners:

- support the provision of high quality and safe perioperative health care in Aotearoa | New Zealand accredited health facilities
- collaborate with other health professionals and provide a crucial role in the interdisciplinary team responsible for providing a high standard of care
- use skills and knowledge gained in perioperative practice to supplement teams in skill adjacent areas such as Emergency and Intensive Care.

Perioperative practitioners:

- work within both the public and private health sectors in Aotearoa | New Zealand
- may work in the health sector but outside of the direct care of people - for example, in management, regulation, quality, safety or education.

Practitioners have a responsibility to ensure they only practise in those areas where they have demonstrated competency as set out in the Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa | New Zealand 2018.

Practitioners may choose to continue to practise under a *workplace title of Anaesthetic Technician*. The scope of practice of a perioperative practitioner includes this workplace title. Equally they may choose to work under the title of Perioperative Practitioner.

The Council specifies the Perioperative Practitioner scope of practice as:

1. A perioperative practitioner is a registered health practitioner who uses their clinical knowledge, skills, and judgement to provide healthcare services. This includes a variety of functions within clinical and non-clinical settings. Perioperative practitioners support the provision of high quality and safe perioperative health care in Aotearoa | New Zealand accredited health facilities. Practitioners use skills and knowledge

gained in perioperative practice to provide care in skill adjacent areas such as Emergency, Intensive Care and Interventional Radiology.

2. All care is ethically, safely, and effectively carried out in accordance with New Zealand law, the Council's Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa | New Zealand 2018 and is culturally safe. This includes ensuring consideration is given to the effect of care on Māori. Practitioners recognise the importance of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and practise consistently within those principles.
3. A perioperative practitioner is a healthcare practitioner who works collaboratively with other health professionals. Perioperative practitioners perform a variety of functions, including but not limited to, clinical practice, research and development, education, management, leadership, and regulation.
4. Perioperative practitioners are individually accountable for ensuring all health services they provide are consistent with their education and skill level and meet all competency and legislative requirements.

The Council's Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand 2018 describe the skills and activities of a perioperative practitioner.

Prescribed Qualifications

For the purpose of registration, a practitioner must hold one of the following:

New Zealand graduates

- a. A bachelor's degree in perioperative practice issued by a New Zealand university accredited by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand; or
- b. A graduate certificate in anaesthetic technology issued by a New Zealand university accredited by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand¹ and successful completion of an anaesthetic technician examination, all of which are accredited and/or approved by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand; or
- c. A tertiary qualification in anaesthetic technology from a New Zealand university combined with relevant and specialised anaesthetic technology experience, and successful completion of an anaesthetic technician examination, all of which are accredited and/or approved by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand.

Overseas educated practitioners

- a. A perioperative practice qualification assessed by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand as substantially equivalent to the prescribed New Zealand qualification; or
- b. A bachelor's or postgraduate degree in a relevant perioperative practice discipline assessed as *relevant* by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand, combined with appropriate clinical experience and
 - a pass in an examination for perioperative practitioners set by the Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand.

Dated at Wellington this 27th day of February 2024.

CALEB BRIDGEMAN, Registrar, Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand.

¹ Pathways b. and c. are transitional pathways and remain in place until the end of 2024 (unless otherwise notified). This is to recognise these pathways are for people currently enrolled in accredited programmes that will come to an end once the current group of graduates have completed their education.