



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL  
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

**POLICY AND GUIDELINES:  
EXPANDED PRACTICE FOR ANAESTHETIC  
TECHNICIANS**

**Revised November 2018**

Policy Title	
<b>Reference Number</b>	2018-Nov-V2-MSC Expanded Practice (AT)
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to registered anaesthetic technicians wishing to perform expanded practice activities, and their employers

Associated Policy Documents	
Document Title	Reference Number
Anaesthetic Technician Expanded Practice Application Form	

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## Policy Overview

The Medical Sciences Council (the Council) is responsible for setting the standards for clinical competence for registered anaesthetic technicians, under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

All registered anaesthetic technicians are required to meet a set of competencies as articulated in the Council's *Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand June 2018* publication. These competencies are a minimum requirement set at the level of an entry-level practitioner and it is expected that anaesthetic technicians will continue to develop their clinical competence over time.

A number of registered anaesthetic technicians may work in an expanded practice role where they perform anaesthesia-related activities that are in addition to the minimum competencies.

This policy document sets the parameters for anaesthetic technicians engaged in expanded practice activities and provides advice for employers wanting to have an expanded practice activity added to the list of activities approved by the Council.

## Definition: Expanded Practice

Expanded practice is where an anaesthetic technician performs activities that are in addition to the minimum competencies of the gazetted scope of practice, and which have been approved by the Medical Sciences Council.

Expanded practice activities must be in the sphere of anaesthesia-related practice within perioperative medicine. Please note expanded practice activities do not include the scrub role within theatre as this is outside the parameters of anaesthesia-related practice.

Anaesthetic technicians performing expanded practice activities practise under the direction of an anaesthetist or intensive care specialist.

## Principles of Expanded Practice

- Expanded practice must be focused on meeting patients' needs and improving health outcomes.
- Expansion of an anaesthetic technician's practice must meet an identified gap(s) in health services.
- Anaesthetic technicians working in an expanded role must have the required knowledge and skills and have the necessary supports to continue in that role.

## Section One: Expanded Practice and the Individual Anaesthetic Technician

An anaesthetic technician may perform any of the expanded practice activities as stated on the Council's "approved list" provided they either:

- Have successfully completed a training programme credentialed by their employing hospital/healthcare facility **and** have provided certification of their competence in the particular expanded practice activity; or
- Have a Council-approved qualification and experience specific to the relevant expanded practice activity **and** have provided certification of their competence in the particular expanded practice activity. For example, anaesthetic technicians who hold a UK-issued qualification, and have experience practising as an operating department practitioner may not need to complete the full hospital-based training programme in PACU due to their prior learning and experience. The training decision is at the discretion of the Director of Anaesthesia (or equivalent).

Anaesthetic technicians who meet the above criteria must make a written application to the Council in respect of the expanded practice activity they wish to have added as an enabling condition onto their scope of practice. That application is made through completing an *Anaesthetic Technician Expanded Practice Application* form.

Once approved, the specified expanded practice activity will remain as a condition on the anaesthetic technician's practising certificate. The practitioner will be required to confirm they continue to meet ongoing competence in the specified expanded practice activity through making a number of statutory declarations each time they renew their annual practising certificate.

Anaesthetic technicians who have been granted a condition on their practising certificate to perform specified expanded practice activities may be subject to random audits by the Council. Those audits may seek documented evidence that the practitioner continues to meet the Council's ongoing competence requirements.

## Section Two: Expanded Practice and the Employer

Employers have a responsibility to ensure anaesthetic technicians are only performing expanded practice activities that are included on the Medical Sciences Council list of *Approved Expanded Practice Activities*.

A hospital/healthcare facility wanting to utilise the expertise, skills and knowledge of anaesthetic technicians to perform an expanded practice activity that is not on the Council's list of approved activities will need to apply to the Council to have the particular activity added.

### Approved Expanded Practice Activities

The Medical Sciences Council has approved the following expanded activities for registered anaesthetic technicians:

- Peripherally inserted central catheters – PICC lines
- Post Anaesthesia Patient Care Unit – PACU

Employers wanting a registered anaesthetic technician to work in the above expanded practice activities must ensure the practitioner has completed a training programme that has been credentialed by the hospital/healthcare facility as meeting the Council's minimum standards for the relevant expanded practice activity.

### Seeking Approval for an Expanded Practice Activity

The hospital/healthcare facility is to submit a written request to the Council to have the expanded practice activity added to the "approved list".

The submission is to include evidence that a consistent framework<sup>1</sup> has been applied to determine if the expanded practice activity is appropriate. In compiling their submission, the hospital/healthcare facility are to provide information that has been formulated in response to a number of guiding questions:

- What are the parameters of the clinical activity/procedure to be included as an expanded practice activity?
- Is there evidence that the expansion of anaesthetic technician practice will improve the health outcomes for patients?
- Does the activity fit within the practice of anaesthesia?
- Is there an appropriate rationale for anaesthetic technicians to perform this activity?
- Is the role or activity supported by professional standards and/or legislation?

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<sup>1</sup> The framework used by the Medical Sciences Council has been adapted from the NZ Nursing Council's *Guideline: Expanded Practice for Registered Nurses*. The Medical Sciences extends their appreciation to the Nursing Council for their willingness to share this valuable resource

- Have potential risks been evaluated and strategies developed to mitigate the identified risks?
- Are there policies and procedures in place to support the expanded activity practice?
- Will the changes be accepted within the organisation and interdisciplinary team?
- Are there processes in place to assess the educational preparation and competence of anaesthetic technicians in preparation for undertaking a training programme?
- Is there a documented training programme for the expanded practice activity?
- Are the levels of accountability for anaesthetic technicians performing the expanded activity explicitly articulated?
- Are there processes to assess individual anaesthetic technician's ongoing competence in the expanded practice activity?
- Is there a process for regularly reviewing the continued appropriateness of the expanded practice activity for anaesthetic technicians?

## Section Three: Approved Expanded Practice Activities – Minimum Standards

The Council requires individual anaesthetic technicians and their employers to meet the following minimum standards in respect of expanded practice activities.

### Working Under Supervision While Undertaking a Training Programme

Anaesthetic technicians must complete a training programme that is credentialed by the employing hospital/healthcare facility. While undertaking training the anaesthetic technician is to practise under the direct supervision<sup>2</sup> of an experienced trainer (who is a registered health practitioner approved by the Director of Anaesthesia/Intensive Care to undertake a trainer role).

### Peripherally Inserted Central Catheters (PICC Lines)

The anaesthetic technician must have successfully participated in a training programme credentialed by their employing hospital/healthcare facility.

As a pre-requisite to undertaking the in-house training programme, the Council expects that the anaesthetic technician will have:

- A current practising certificate with no limiting conditions on their practice
- Relevant post-qualification experience
- Intravenous cannulation certification
- CORE Advanced certification
- National Radiation Laboratory Core of Knowledge certification (as applicable)

### PICC Training Programme

As a minimum the hospital/healthcare facility training programme in PICC line insertions for anaesthetic technicians will include:

- Ultrasound training for vascular access
- CXR education
- Aseptic technique
- Seldinger technique
- Tip guidance technique
- Informed consent, time out, and documentation
- Simulation training for needling techniques

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<sup>2</sup> Direct supervision requires the nominated trainer to provide 'over the shoulder' oversight of the anaesthetic technician during their period of training

- Recommended reading material
- Staged training of PICC line insertions on patients during which the anaesthetic technician:
  - o Observes a minimum of 5 PICC line insertions by a trained/certified inserter
  - o Performs double scrubbing, increasing the number of stages independently
  - o Independently scrubs and inserts a minimum of 5 PICC lines without difficulty

### Competence Assessment

The anaesthetic technician is to be formally assessed on their competence in performing PICC line insertions. The assessment is to include evidence of their:

- Ability to perform all steps of the procedure independently and in line with organisational policy; and
- Theoretical knowledge; and
- Documented certification by the trainer that the anaesthetic technician has successfully completed the PICC line insertion training programme

### Ongoing Competence

Anaesthetic technicians performing PICC line insertions must be able to demonstrate their ongoing competence. As a minimum this will require them to:

- Perform a minimum of 20 PICC line insertions in the preceding 12-months; and
- Maintain a logbook of their PICC line insertion practice
- Successfully complete any ongoing hospital/healthcare facility competence assessments as per organisational policy
- Be able to demonstrate they have undertaken CPD that is relevant and appropriate to the expanded practice activity

## Post Anaesthetic Patient Care Unit (PACU)

The anaesthetic technician must have successfully participated in a training programme credentialed by their employing hospital/healthcare facility.

As a pre-requisite to undertaking the in-house training programme, the Council expects that the anaesthetic technician will have:

- A current practising certificate with no limiting conditions on their practice
- Relevant post-qualification experience
- Intravenous cannulation certification
- CORE Advanced certification

## PACU Training Programme

As a minimum the hospital/healthcare facility training programme in PACU for anaesthetic technicians will include:

### *Airway Management*

- Selection and preparation of appropriate airway equipment
- Positioning of artificial airways to maintain respiration'
- Removal of artificial airways
- Maintenance of universal precautions

### *Monitoring Assessment and Care*

- Communication with patient
- Plan of care
- Monitoring of support equipment
- Monitoring of operation sites, drain and wound care
- Drug therapy assessment, assessment of pain
- Monitoring of fluid balance, fluid therapy
- Monitoring comfort levels and/or adverse reactions
- Monitoring of recovery from anaesthesia
- Monitoring emergencies – respiratory and cardiovascular
- Pharmacology of common drugs used in the PACU phase

### *Patient Care Handover*

- Documentation requirements
- Communication requirements for patient handover
- Accepting handover from the anaesthetist
- Handing over to ward staff
- Handing over to a PACU colleague

### Competence Assessment

The anaesthetic technician is to be formally assessed on their competence to practise in PACU. The assessment is to include evidence of their:

- Ability to perform all PACU activities independently and in line with organisational policy
- Theoretical knowledge
- Documented certification by the trainer that the anaesthetic technician has successfully completed the PACU training programme

### Ongoing Competence

Anaesthetic technicians working in PACU must be able to demonstrate their ongoing competence. As a minimum this will require them to:

- Worked a minimum of 160 hours in PACU in the preceding 12-months; and
- Maintain a logbook of their PACU practice
- Successfully complete any ongoing hospital/healthcare facility competence assessments as per organisational policy
- Be able to demonstrate that they have undertaken CPD that is relevant and appropriate to the expanded practice activity