



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

Strategic Directions

April 2019 – March 2024

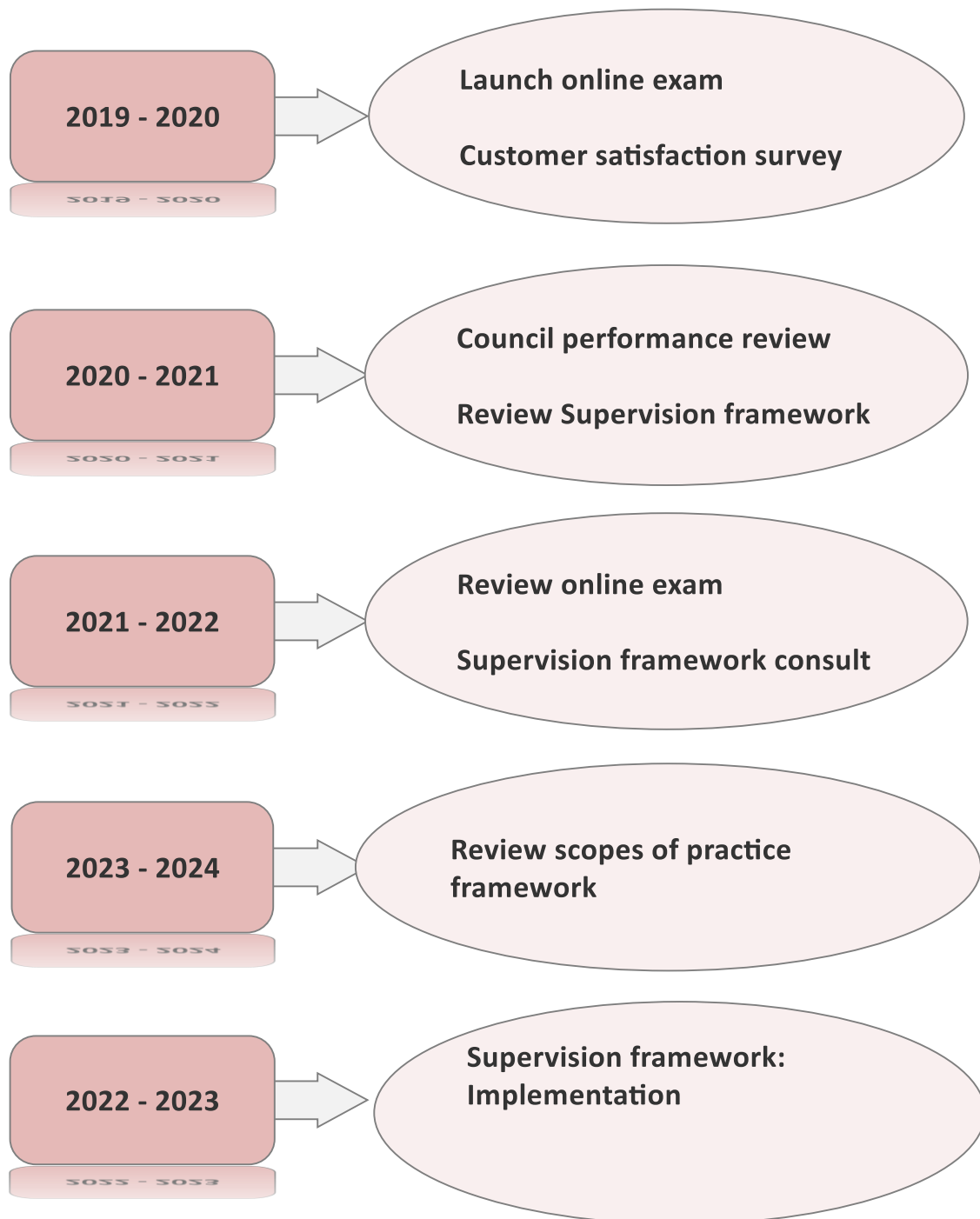
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Executive Summary

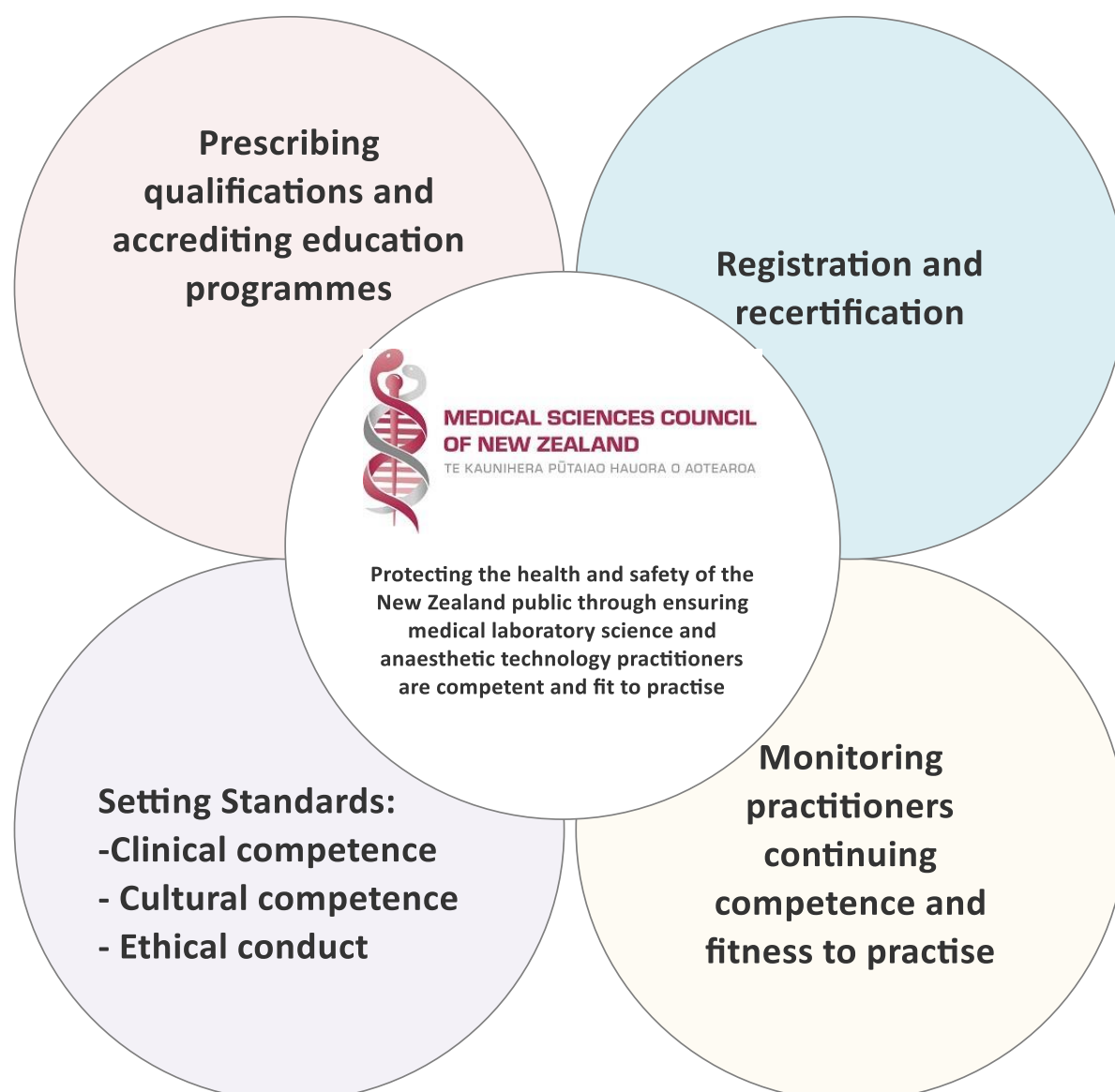
This document sets out the Medical Sciences Council's (the Council) strategic directions for the five-year period from April 2019 to March 2024. It builds on previous strategic directions documents published by the Council.

The Council's Strategic Directions 2019 -2024 document provides the foundational framework of our work over the next five years. It identifies areas of particular focus, and provides a benchmark against which we can measure our progress in achieving our strategic priorities.



Our Work

The Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand is a responsible authority under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act). We are one of sixteen independent health regulators responsible for protecting the health and safety of the New Zealand public by ensuring health practitioners are competent and fit to practise. We regulate medical laboratory science practitioners and anaesthetic technology practitioners



The Council's functions¹ are set out in section 118 of the Act. In summary this includes a number of core responsibilities:

Prescribing qualifications and accrediting education programmes to ensure graduates have the competencies and attributes required of registered medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners.

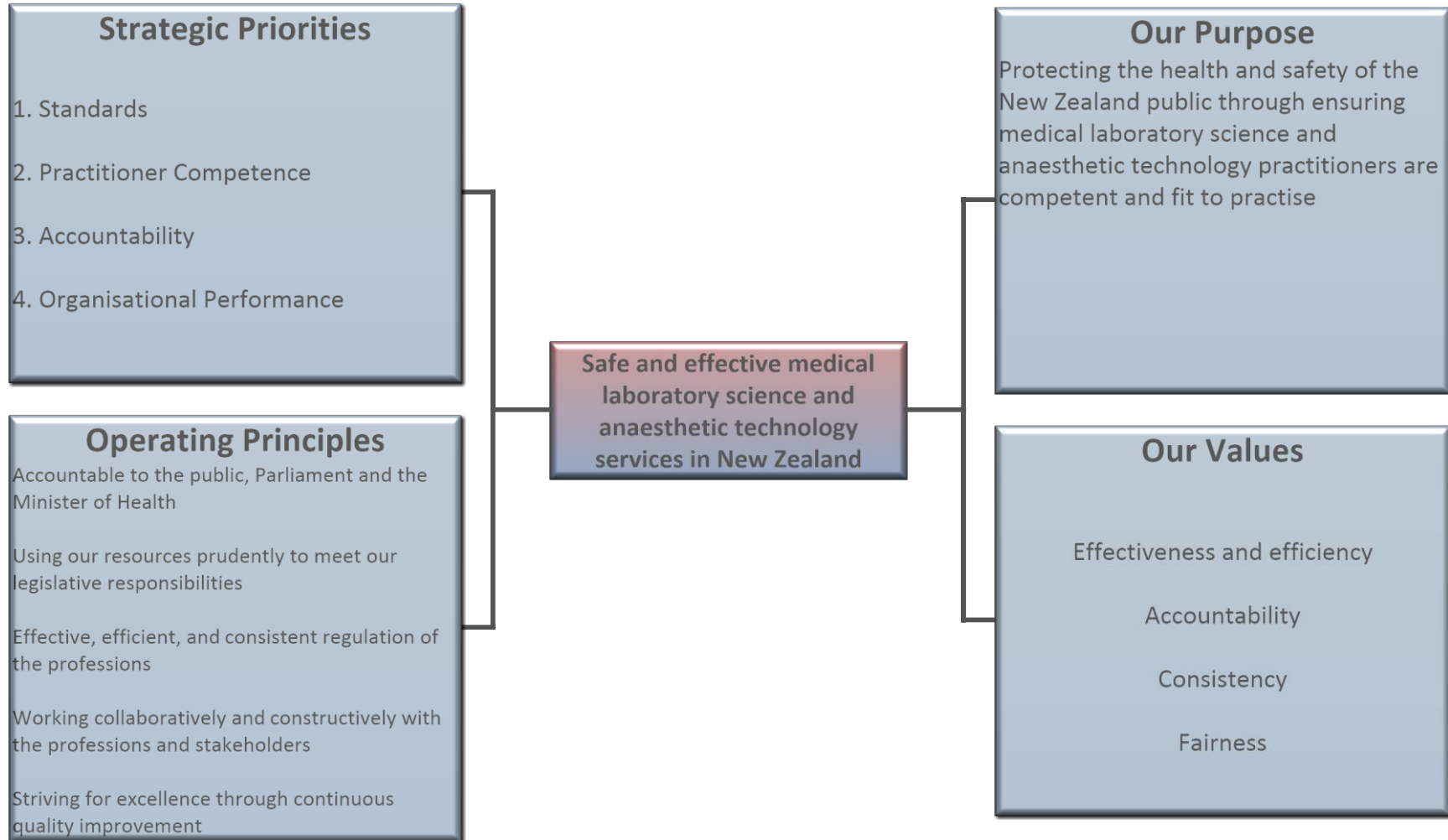
Setting the standards for clinical and cultural competence and ethical conduct that must be met by all medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners.

Registration and recertification of medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners ensuring that only those with the relevant skills, competencies and fitness to practise are able to practise in New Zealand.

Ensuring registered medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners continue to be competent and fit to practise by investigating their performance, conduct or health in response to concerns raised, and taking appropriate action to protect the safety of the public.



¹ An unabridged extract of section 118 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 is provided in Appendix 1





A Partnership Arrangement

Secretariat services are provided through a New Zealand registered company, Medical Sciences Secretariat (MSS), that is jointly owned by the Medical Sciences Council and the Medical Radiation Technologists Board.

This shared arrangement enables both responsible authorities to achieve efficiencies in terms of costs, and consistency in regulatory standards. While each Council and Board is a separate authority with legal responsibility for the statutory regulation of different groups of health professionals, our strategic priorities and key initiatives are often similar.

Sharing of our secretariat resources enables both authorities to jointly manage a number of key initiatives and subsequent annual business goals. Consequently our individual strategic planning documents share a number of similarities.

Health Regulation Within a Changing World

Health regulation is susceptible to wider national and international trends such as population demographics, the impact of rapidly changing technology both within the health sector and beyond, and changing lifestyle trends and related health issues. Adaptable and flexible governance will be critical in facing these trends. A number of factors will influence the Council's health regulation responsibilities over the next 5-years and beyond:

Population Growth



2014: 4.5 million
2068: 6.2 million

Auckland-centric:
2013: 34%
2043: 40%

Ethnically Diverse Population



Maori, Asian and Pacific peoples increase their share of total population

Mid 2020's: Asian peoples exceed Maori

Digital Innovation



Workplace automation

Rapid adoption of new technologies

Changing work types

Labour Force Changes



Labour Force in Late 2050's:

- 50% +45 years

2038:

- 9-13% +65 years

2068:

- 9-16% +65 years

Aging Population



2068:

50% +45 years

24-32% +65 years

The Next Five Years

The Council has identified four core strategic priorities for the next five-year period (2017-2022). They articulate the areas of activity that will help us to move from where we are now to what we need to achieve in meeting our regulatory responsibilities. Explicitly stating our strategic priorities helps us to balance resourcing our business-as-usual daily activities as well as direct resources into areas that will improve our effectiveness and efficiency.

Our Operating Base

In 2016 the MSS office in Wellington was affected by the Kaikoura earthquake and in 2017 our secretariat team moved to alternative premises. Ongoing concerns about the safety of the office space at 80 The Terrace led the Council and their colleague authority, the Medical Radiation Technologists Board, to make a decision in 2018 that a return to those premises would not be prudent.

The driving factor for this decision has been the continuing health and safety of our people. While we continue with our efforts in negotiating an exit from our lease obligations for 80 The Terrace, there has been a financial impact due to additional accommodation costs for our current office space in Panama Street. The Council has sufficient reserve funds to be able to meet this additional lease cost without compromising our core business delivery.

Strategic Priorities

Since its introduction in 2003 there has been little change to the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act. However the social, political, economic and cultural environments within which medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners work, continues to evolve.

The Council's five-year strategic directions document for the period 2017-2022 has been formulated with a view to ensuring our work both now and in the foreseeable future continues to be responsive to the world within which medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology are practised.

Utilising a strategic framework provides the Council with a focused approach for steering our regulatory work in a world typified by rapidly changing technology. It allows us to continue to protect public safety in the years ahead through ensuring medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology scopes of practice, standards, competencies, education, and remedial measures are sufficiently robust and responsive.

Strategic Priority 1: Standards

Appropriate and sustainable standards of clinical competence, cultural competence, and ethical conduct for the protection of public health and safety

Under the Act the Council is responsible for setting the standards of clinical competence, cultural competence, and ethical conduct. It is the sole organisation with the legal authority to do this for medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners in New Zealand.

The standards of practice set by the Council provide the minimum threshold for competence and acceptable behaviour that registered medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners must meet to ensure the protection of public health and safety.

Having clearly articulated competencies and standards of ethical conduct are critical tools in helping to inform patients and the public of what they can expect from registered medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners. They also provide clarity to practitioners themselves about the standards they must meet.

The Council also employs mechanisms to ensure practitioners continue to meet the standards for ongoing fitness to practice. The Act includes specific provisions for the Council to respond to concerns that may be raised about an individual practitioner in terms of their competence, health, or conduct.

Strategic Priority 2: Practitioner Competence

Our regulatory frameworks support competent and flexible medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology workforces both in the short and long term

Under the Act registered practitioners must be recertified on an annual basis. Through the mechanism of recertification the Council can assure the public that individual practitioners continue to be competent to practise. Recertification includes a number of complementary strategies including annual renewal of practising certificates, and evidence of engagement in ongoing learning and professional development.

Strategic Priority 3: Accountability

Strengthen our engagement with stakeholders and their confidence in the work of the Council

Health regulation does not occur in a vacuum. For many of our activities the Council is reliant on the participation of our stakeholders including practitioners, patients and the public, educators, employers, professional bodies and other regulators. This helps us to ensure our activities remain appropriate, relevant, and consistent in regulating medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practices.

We operate in a world where there is increasing and continually changing societal expectations in respect of health care and health practitioners. The Council needs to understand the views of our stakeholders, and offer ongoing opportunities for people to tell us what they think about our work.

Anecdotal information indicates there is a gap in many of our stakeholders understanding of the Council's role and purpose. We need to do more to explain the range and limits of our responsibilities. This will require an increased level of visibility with many of our stakeholders.

Narrowing this gap in understanding is integral for the Council's success in achieving our other strategic priorities.

Strategic Priority 4: Organisational Performance

There are strong governance and operational structures and robust practices in place to support the Council in achieving our legislative functions and responsibilities

Effective governance is critical for good decision-making and ensuring quality of our regulatory actions. This leads to better outcomes for the public and reasonable impacts for practitioners. Governance is concerned with roles and responsibilities, accountability measures, oversight of business processes, financial reporting, and risk and performance management.

Having the right capabilities in place is critical for ensuring the Council operates effectively and efficiently. Having the systems, policies and processes necessary for delivering our functions within an environment that minimises costs, compliance and complexity for practitioners underpins the Council's work.

Having reliable and integrated IT systems is critical to the success of our work to ensure we have the necessary functionality for operating effectively in the contemporary regulatory environment. This includes taking advantage of new technology and our partnership arrangement with the Medical Radiation Technologists Board to not only improve the way we operate, but also to improve the ways we interact with our stakeholders.

Over the lifetime of this plan the Council will continue to develop its quality management system and processes. This work is undertaken as a joint initiative with the Medical Radiation Technologists Board through our jointly-owned secretariat (MSS). It includes revising and improving our IT systems to support core regulatory and business functions, financial management, and information management.

Measuring our performance is integral to the Council being able to annually the status of meeting our strategic priorities and objectives and annual business goals. Performance measures help to ensure our actions remain focused on the appropriate areas to deliver better outcomes for the public through competent and safe medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology workforces.

While the Council reports on our activities each year through an Annual Report, over the span of this strategic plan we will also look at other ways for measuring our performance. This will help us to better understand whether we are achieving what we say we will. Development of a performance measures framework will be undertaken as another joint initiative with the Medical Radiation Technologists Board.

Strategic Priorities and Key Indicators

1 Standards

Our regulatory frameworks support a competent and flexible workforce both in the short and the long term

1.1 Competence and ethical conduct standards continue to be current and relevant

1.2 Medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners are cognisant of the purpose and content of the Council's competence and ethical conduct standards and comply with these

1.3 Relevant stakeholders (e.g. employers, educators, professional bodies) are cognisant of the purpose and content of the Board's competence and ethical conduct standards

2 Practitioner Competence

Appropriate and sustainable standards of clinical competence, cultural competence, and ethical conduct for the protection of public health and safety

2.1 The Council's recertification standards are appropriate, relevant, and proportionate to support practitioners with achieving lifelong competence

2.2 There are appropriate and sustainable processes in place to support the Council's recertification strategies

3 Accountability

Strengthen our engagement with stakeholders and their confidence in the work of the Board

3.1 The Council provides information to help the public understand the role and responsibilities of the Medical Sciences Council

3.2 Medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology practitioners understand the role of the Council in regulating their professions

3.3 Other stakeholders understand the role of the Council

4 Organisational Performance

There are strong governance and organisational structures and robust business practices in place to support the Board in achieving our legislative functions and responsibilities

4.1 The Council's governance model is enabling, effective, and efficient

4.2 Policies and processes are current, relevant, and effective

4.3 Organisational systems support the efficient and effective delivery of our legislative functions

4.4 The Council has the necessary capabilities to deliver our strategic priorities

4.5 There is a robust framework for measuring the Council's performance

Appendix 1: The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003: Section 118

The functions of each authority appointed in respect of a health profession are as follows:

- (a) To prescribe the qualifications required for scopes of practice within the profession, and, for that purpose, to accredit and monitor educational institutions and degrees, courses of studies, or programmes:
- (b) To authorise the registration of health practitioners under this Act, and to maintain registers:
- (c) To consider applications for annual practising certificates:
- (d) To review and promote the competence of health practitioners:
- (e) To recognise, accredit, and set programmes to ensure the ongoing competence of health practitioners:
- (f) To receive and act on information from health practitioners, employers, and the Health and Disability Commissioner about the competence of health practitioners:
- (g) To notify employers, the Accident Compensation Corporation, the Director-General of Health, and the Health and Disability Commissioner that the practice of a health practitioner may pose a risk of harm to the public:
- (h) To consider the cases of health practitioners who may be unable to perform the functions required for the practice of the profession:
- (i) To set standards of clinical competence, cultural competence, and ethical conduct to be observed by health practitioners of the profession:
- (j) To liaise with other authorities appointed under this Act about matters of common interest:
- (k) To promote education and training in the profession:
- (l) To promote public awareness of the responsibilities of the authority:
- (m) To exercise and perform any other functions, powers, and duties that are conferred or imposed on it by or under this Act or any other enactment.