



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL  
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

# POLICY AND GUIDELINES: SUPERVISION FOR ANAESTHETIC TECHNICIANS

June 2019

<b>Policy Title</b>	
<b>Reference Number</b>	2019-Jun-V2-MSc Supervision (AT)
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to anaesthetic technicians required to practise under supervision.

<b>Associated Policy Documents</b>	
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## Policy Overview

Sections 22 (3), (a) and (b) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 allow the Council to place a condition on a practitioner's scope of practice as a mechanism for confirming they are competent to practise.

This document sets out the Council's policy and guidelines for registered anaesthetic technicians (AT) working under supervision to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of patients.

### Supervision: Definition

Supervision is a formal process of professional support and teaching to enable the practitioner to build on their knowledge, skills and professional attributes, and to progressively assume responsibility for their own practice.

### Supervision: Context

Supervision for anaesthetic technicians is typically provided within three distinct contexts:

#### Trainee Anaesthetic Technicians

Trainee AT's are not registered, consequently it is important their care of patients is at all times supervised by a registered AT. Training hospitals have a duty to the public, the trainees and their supervisors that they have a robust system in place to ensure the safety of the public. Trainees must never be put in a situation that compromises patient or trainee well-being.

#### Trainee Anaesthetic Technicians (Registered Nurse)

Registered nurses completing the Graduate Certificate of Anaesthetic Technology hold registration with the New Zealand Nursing Council (NZNC) while they are training as an anaesthetic technician. As registered health practitioners they are under the legal obligations of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 as administered by the NZNC.

#### Registered Anaesthetic Technician with a Condition on Practice

In some circumstances the Council may register an anaesthetic technician with a condition that they complete a specified period of supervision.

## Supervision Overview

	Definition	Specifications	Responsibilities
<b>Supervision</b>	<p><b>Level 1</b></p> <p>The practitioner providing supervision must be in the same room as the anaesthetic technician or trainee under supervision.</p> <p><b>Levels 2 and 3</b></p> <p>The practitioner providing supervision must be on site and available to give prompt practical assistance and/or advice at any time.</p>	<p>The practitioner works under the supervision of a registered anaesthetic technician who has the expertise and relevant knowledge of anaesthetic technology</p>	<p>When a condition of supervision is placed on a practitioner's registration, they must provide the Council with the name of the anaesthetic technician who will act as a <i>nominated</i> supervisor.</p> <p>Anaesthetic technicians providing supervision take full accountability for the practice of the practitioner they supervise.</p> <p>The nominated supervisor may delegate their daily oversight of a practitioner to another registered anaesthetic technician with the appropriate expertise and relevant knowledge. However the nominated supervisor retains overall responsibility.</p>

## Levels of Supervision

The practitioner providing supervision or direction is accountable for the safe practice of those they supervise.

	Trainee Anaesthetic Technicians (including registered nurses)	
Definition	Supervisor	Trainee
<p>The degree of supervision provided to the individual practitioner can be reduced over time and as the practitioner under supervision demonstrates competence in particular procedures/tasks.</p> <p>Supervision is provided by a registered anaesthetic technician who holds a current practising certificate</p>	<p><b>Level 1 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervisor must be in the same room as the trainee under supervision.</li> <li>- Validated documentation is required to support the trainee's progression to Level 2 supervision</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervisor must be on site and available to provide prompt practical assistance/advice at any time to trainees who are in an anaesthetising location.</li> <li>- Be conversant with the trainee's caseload and experience.</li> <li>- The trainee-to-supervisor ratio must not exceed 2:1 on each duty.</li> <li>- Validated documentation is required to support the trainee's progression to Level 3 supervision.</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 3 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervisor is available in the hospital but is not exclusively available for a specific supervisee.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 1 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trainee must have a registered anaesthetic technician with them at all times</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completed at least 460 hours of clinical training time; OR</li> <li>- 960 hours of clinical training time if they have not completed the Anaesthesia I paper</li> <li>- In-house assessment of competency including a self-assessment and Level 2 and 3 NZATS anaesthetic machine check</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 3 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trainee is under indirect supervision and must initiate support for complex or emergency anaesthesia</li> </ul> <p><b>Registered Nurse/Trainee Anaesthetic Technician</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Registered nurses are responsible for their own practice. While training as an anaesthetic technician, they must not be placed or allow themselves to be placed in a situation for which they lack clinical experience without supervision</li> <li>- The training hospital has a responsibility for ensuring the registered nurse training as an anaesthetic technician is provided with an appropriate level of supervision</li> </ul>

	Registered Anaesthetic Technician (with a supervised practice condition)	
Definition	Supervisor	Registered Anaesthetic Technician
The degree of supervision provided to the anaesthetic technician can be reduced over time and as they demonstrate competence in particular procedures/tasks	<p><b>Level 1 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The anaesthetic technician providing supervision must be in the same room as the anaesthetic technician under supervision.</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The anaesthetic technician providing supervision must be on-site and within a reasonable distance so as to be able to respond promptly should the anaesthetic technician under supervision need assistance and/or advice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 3 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervisor is available in the hospital but is not exclusively available for a specific supervisee.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level 1 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level 1 supervision applies when the anaesthetic technician being supervised is performing procedures/tasks for which competence sign-off has not been achieved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The anaesthetic technician under supervision has been signed-off as competent in the procedures/tasks they are performing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 3 Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The anaesthetic technician under supervision has been signed-off as competent in a range of procedures/tasks they would be expected to perform as part of their usual routine but still require sign-off across the whole range of competencies as required for their scope of practice.</li> </ul>

## Supervision Pre-Requisites and Responsibilities

Pre-Requisites for Nominated Supervisors	Responsibilities: Nominated Supervisors and Supervisors Providing Daily Oversight	Responsibilities: Nominated Supervisors	Responsibilities: Anaesthetic Technician Working Under Supervision
Hold a current practising certificate that does not contain any restrictive conditions on their practice	Take responsibility for their own and the supervised practitioner's practice	Maintain supervision and assessment integrity	Maintain a professional relationship with the supervisor
Be actively engaged in a Council-approved CPD programme	Avoid and/or declare any conflicts of interest	Establish regular meetings with the supervised practitioner and conduct regular performance reviews with timely remediation of any identified issues	Be prepared for meetings with supervisor
	Ensure the health and safety of patients is protected through the practice of the supervised practitioner and the range of tasks for which supervision is provided	Notify the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if the relationship with the supervised practitioner breaks down</li> <li>- of any concerns regarding the conduct, or health of the supervised practitioner</li> <li>- if the supervised practitioner is not complying with the conditions or undertakings as set by the Council</li> </ul>	Adapt their practice to address the remediation of identified areas of practice needing improvement
Have a sound understanding of the competencies required for registration in the anaesthetic technician scope of practice	Maintain a professional relationship with the supervised practitioner	Complete all required supervision reports as set by the Council	Recognise professional limits and work within those limits
Declare any conflict of interest prior to undertaking supervisor responsibilities	Be contactable and readily available to the supervised practitioner		Immediately advise supervisor of any issues and all adverse clinical incidents
	Take appropriate steps to ensure the practitioner is practising safely		
	Observe the practitioner, conduct case reviews and provide constructive feedback		

## Competency Sign-Off: Registered Anaesthetic Technician (with supervised practice condition)

At the end of the supervision period, the nominated supervisor is required to provide the Council with written confirmation the anaesthetic technician meets all of the competencies for that scope of practice. This is inclusive of ethical practice, awareness of limitations on their practice, professional and cultural competence, and a commitment to lifelong learning.