

Allocating Anaesthetic Technician Resources

Revision Schedule			
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One	July 2019	Medical Sciences Council	2021
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1. The purpose of this document is to clarify the Medical Sciences Council's (the Council) position on the practice of Anaesthetic Technicians providing simultaneous assistance across more than one operating theatre
2. The Council's position is that Anaesthetic Technicians **SHOULD NOT** simultaneously provide assistance across more than one operating theatre
3. The Council's view is that an anaesthetic technician should be rostered to one theatre. Anaesthetic Technicians practising across two theatres should not be standard and/or routine practice and should only occur in an emergency situation. The Council's position is that in order to protect the health and safety of the public there must always be the immediate availability of a qualified, practising anaesthetic technician.
4. All registered anaesthetic technicians are expected to practise in accordance with the Council's [Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand](#) (2025) and other relevant policies and guidance.
5. The Council's position aligns with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists [PS08 Statement on the Assistant for the Anaesthetist](#) (2016) which includes recommendations on the level of staffing to be provided during the administration of anaesthesia:

5.1. The presence of a trained assistant for the anaesthetist is essential:

5.1.1. During the maintenance of anaesthesia an assistant must be immediately available.

5.1.2. After anaesthesia.

6. The Council expects anaesthetic technicians to comply with the professional body (NZ Anaesthetic Technicians Society) guidelines statement.

“NZATS promotes the quality and safety of patient care, therefore, supporting a 1:1 ratio of anaesthesia assistance for every case where anaesthesia is administered”.

7. The Council is of the opinion that compliance with the ANZCA and NZATS guidelines supports the safety of the public, and that safe practice for the provision of anaesthesia requires an anaesthetic technician being present for the induction of anaesthesia (or establishment of regional block), as well as being immediately available during maintenance, and at the conclusion of anaesthesia.
8. The Council expects that the anaesthetic technicians with the support of their employer will take responsibility for ensuring their practice meets the above safety requirements.
9. The Council accepts that in a genuine emergency, the principles outlined may need to be overridden until circumstances again allow a 1:1 ratio of technicians to operating rooms.

References

Medical Sciences Council: Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand (2025) [Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

ANZCA: PS08(A) Position statement on the assistant for the anaesthetist 2016 [PS08 Statement on the Assistant for the Anaesthetist](#)