

Medical Sciences Council AI Guidance

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Overview

1. Te Kaunihera Pūtaiao Hauora O Aotearoa | The Medical Sciences Council (the Council) is responsible for protecting the health and safety of the Aotearoa New Zealand public by ensuring anaesthetic technicians registered with the Council are competent and fit to practise.
2. Artificial intelligence (AI) usage is increasing across the New Zealand health system, including use by the anaesthetic technology profession. AI offers opportunities for efficiency and new ways of working but comes with risks that must be understood and managed by health practitioners using these tools.

Purpose

3. The intent of this document is to provide guidance to anaesthetic technicians on the safe, secure, and responsible use of AI in the delivery of anaesthetic technology services.
4. This guidance applies to all anaesthetic technicians registered with the Council and includes the use of any AI tools that:
 - Are embedded into medical devices and existing technology
 - Record and scribe information to create or support clinical notes
 - Use large language generative models/tools such as:
 - ChatGPT
 - CoPilot
 - Gemini
 - Any other model that generates outputs from an existing pool of information.

- Manage clinical inboxes or databases that contain personal information or otherwise influence access to care¹
 - Generate new content including clinical recommendations from models and data
 - Provide monitoring during care and/or assist with clinical management.
5. All anaesthetic technicians are encouraged to develop their education and experience in AI use to ensure safe and effective healthcare is provided to the public. However, the use of AI is not considered a replacement for a practitioner's clinical and professional competence.
6. Due to the evolving nature of AI technology and its risks and impacts, the Council will review this guidance periodically as it considers the use of AI in a wider context. This includes potential impacts on:
- Public safety
 - Clinical decision making
 - Health information privacy
 - Practitioner Competence
 - Education
 - Ethical and clinical and cultural standards for practice.

Legislative expectations

7. All activities using AI performed by an anaesthetic technician in their work capacity must work within:
- The Scope of Practice for Anaesthetic Technicians as specified by the Council in accordance with the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003
 - The Council's Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians, Code of Ethical Conduct, and Cultural Competence Standards
 - The Privacy Act 2020, Code of Health and Disability Service Consumer Rights 1996, and all other applicable New Zealand legislation and guidance
 - Any other relevant workplace policy and guidance.

Definitions

Artificial intelligence (AI): Technologies that simulate human intelligence and enable the use of data to learn, reason, self-correct and create new content.²

Machine learning: Used by AI systems to collect and understand information to make decisions or predictions around clinical management of a service user.

^{1,2} Definitions provided by the Medical Council of New Zealand: [Guidance on using artificial intelligence \(AI\) in patient care](#)

Hallucination: False or inaccurate information provided by an AI model that appears credible.³

AI bias: Inherent assumptions from the design of an AI model and/or the data it is trained on.⁴

Data sovereignty: Typically refers to the understanding that data is subject to the laws of the nation within which it is stored. Māori data sovereignty recognises that Māori data should be subject to Māori governance. Māori data sovereignty supports tribal sovereignty and the realisation of Māori and Iwi aspirations.⁵

Guidance

8. These guidance principles outline the Council's position and ensure the use of AI in the anaesthetic technology profession upholds the Council's competence standards in practice.

Person-centred care

9. Use of AI must maintain the same standard of care, respect, and responsiveness of anaesthetic technology services. Practitioners should be aware if any tools or equipment they use involves AI and develop a general understanding of its capabilities and limitations.

Safety

10. Safety remains a priority for the provision of anaesthetic technology services. Practitioners should be aware of the potential for AI hallucinations when producing information, as well as the negative impacts it can have on clinical decision making and reporting. Anaesthetic technology services should only ever maintain the same standard of care or improve it without compromising patient safety.

Equity of access

11. AI tools must work to reduce barriers and increase the efficiency of care, not create disparities, especially for rural, Māori, and other underserved populations who may be subject to predetermined bias within an AI algorithm/dataset. Practitioners should work to ensure any use of AI does not prevent people from receiving equal opportunities to access, engage with, understand, and receive healthcare services.

Professional integrity

12. Anaesthetic technician practitioners using AI tools must operate within their current scope of practice and adhere to the following:
 - [Competence standards for anaesthetic technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand 2025](#)
 - [Code of Ethical Conduct 2020](#)
 - [Cultural Competence Standards 2018](#)

³ Definition provided by Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora [Using generative AI and large language models | Health Professionals](#)

⁴ Definitions provided by the [NZ Government Interim Generative AI guidance for the public service](#).

⁵ Definitions provided by [Te Mana Raraunga – Māori Data Sovereignty Network](#).

13. Practitioners will ensure transparency, confidentiality, and accountability regardless of the level and frequency in which AI is used in a service delivery.

Cultural safety

14. Use of AI tools will be culturally respectful and uphold responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Practitioners providing health care services with the assistance of AI must comply with all professional and cultural competence standards for anaesthetic technicians.
15. Practitioners must recognise the inherent biases and inconsistencies within the information generated by some AI systems, and the potential impacts they may have on the provision of equal health outcomes.

Transparency and informed consent

16. Anaesthetic technicians using AI to support activities that involve the collection and use of personal data must ensure this is disclosed and transparently communicated with the individual concerned. It is the responsibility of the practitioner to protect individuals' privacy when using AI tools, including not disclosing identifiable or personal information without the individual's informed consent.

Data security

17. Anaesthetic technicians will ensure any AI tools are used with the knowledge and support of their employer. They will know how any information they handle is collected, stored, and communicated by AI tools. When disclosing the use of AI to people receiving care, practitioners must use their professional judgement to decide the level of detail provided about the use of AI tools. Explanations must clearly explain any risk and allow the individual to understand how it is used in the delivery of their care.

Evidence-informed practice

18. Any use of AI tools in anaesthetic technology practise will be supported by research and best practice guidelines. Practitioners will use the principles in this guidance document and consider the validity and accuracy of all information collected through the use of AI in clinical and professional settings. It is the responsibility of the practitioner to communicate any concerns about the use of AI to the appropriate level.

Practitioner responsibility

19. Practitioners remain responsible for all clinical and professional decisions, including those made with the support of AI tools. If using AI tools produces incorrect results, analysis or reporting, the practitioner remains accountable regardless of the type of care or level of AI use. This includes checking all AI-generated information for accuracy and validity and maintaining human oversight over all clinical and professional processes that involve AI.

Collaborative practice

20. AI tools should facilitate collaboration and communication. Anaesthetic technicians should work with other health professionals in the workplace to effectively and securely support services, to make the most of their skillset and ensure improved health outcomes.

Education and competence

21. Anaesthetic technicians are encouraged to educate themselves, gain experience, and develop skills with AI tools and models. This includes the rapidly changing capabilities of AI technology and how it affects clinical practice. Practitioners must be aware of the possibility that an AI output is incorrect, invents information and/or sources (hallucination), and understand how these can be mitigated.

Council position

22. The Council supports the use of artificial intelligence by anaesthetic technicians in principle where they adhere to these guiding principles, relevant legislation, and Council standards. The availability and use of AI is rapidly expanding into the Aotearoa New Zealand health system. The Council endorses the use of AI where:
- It increases the quality and efficiency of healthcare services for consumers of healthcare services
 - It creates the opportunity to provide better care in a timely manner, enabling faster treatment and/or more effective monitoring
 - It is used in a secure, transparent manner with adequate oversight, and any information produced is critically assessed for accuracy and validity
 - Potential inherent biases and/or inconsistencies are acknowledged and mitigated.
23. The Council views artificial intelligence as, when used as a secure supplemental tool, an enabler of service optimisation. It is an effective method of addressing the increased demand for service efficiency and embraces technological advances available to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Review

24. Because the availability and use of AI is increasing at a rapid rate, the Council will regularly review this guidance to reflect the development of new technologies in the anaesthetic technician profession, and ensure it remains fit for purpose.

References

Health NZ/ Te Whatu Ora: [Using generative AI and large language models | Health Professionals](#)

New Zealand Government: [Interim Generative AI Guidance for the Public Service](#)

Office of the Privacy Commissioner: [Artificial Intelligence and the Information Privacy Principles](#)

Te Mana Raraunga: [Māori Data Sovereignty Network](#)

Medical Council of New Zealand: [Guidance on using artificial intelligence \(AI\) in patient care](#)