



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

CONSULTATION OUTCOMES: REVIEW OF THE ANAESTHETIC TECHNICIAN SCOPE OF PRACTICE

April 2018

IN OCTOBER 2017 THE MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL PUBLISHED A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT SEEKING FEEDBACK ON A PROPOSAL TO RE-DEFINE THE ANAESTHETIC TECHNICIAN SCOPE OF THE PRACTICE AND THE ENTRY-LEVEL COMPETENCIES THAT WOULD BE ALIGNED TO THE PROPOSED SCOPE DEFINITION.

THIS REPORT SUMMARISES THE KEY THEMES OF THE CONSULTATION FEEDBACK AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE.

Contents

Introduction	2
Consultation Response Rate	2
An Overview of the Consultation Feedback	3
Council Decision	4

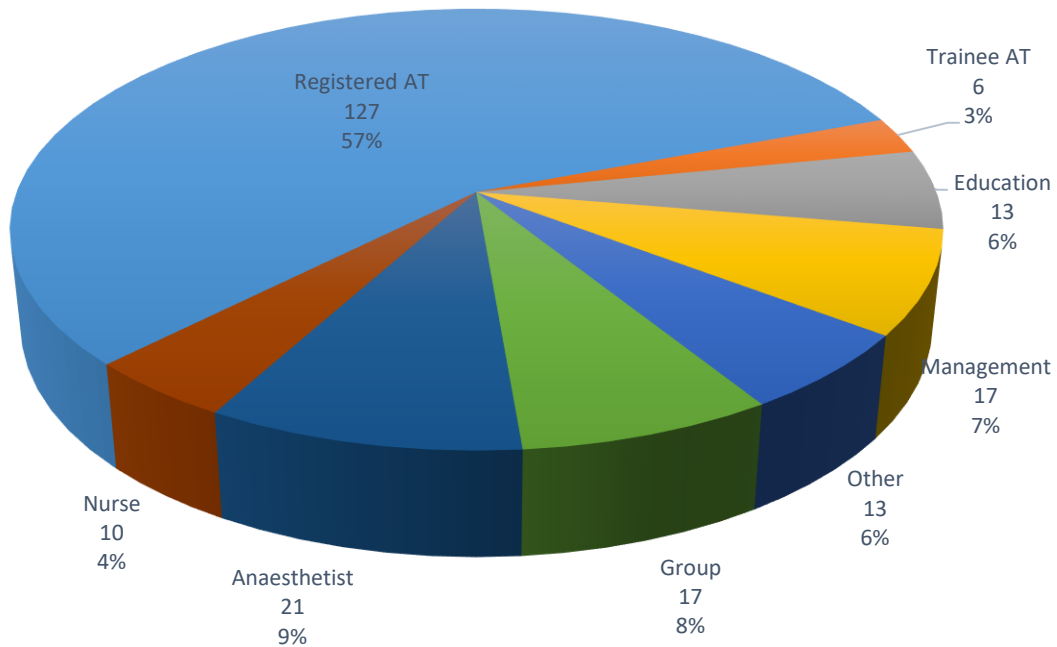
Introduction

The Medical Sciences Council (the Council) extends its thanks and appreciation to the individuals and groups who provided feedback on a recent (October 2017) consultation on a proposal to re-define the practice parameters to encompass a variety of perioperative activities, as well as a name change from the current title of *Anaesthetic Technician* to *Perioperative Practitioner*. The consultation document also included a revised set of competence standards aligned to the proposed re-defined scope.

Consultation Response Rate

Consultation respondents were asked to provide their feedback via an online questionnaire. Responses were received from:

Consultation Respondents



An Overview of the Consultation Feedback

	Response Options	Anaesthetist	Nurse	Registered AT	Trainee AT	Education	MGT	Other	Group	total	
<i>Q 1</i> <i>Perioperative name</i>	Agreed	14	0	76	3	3	8	6	0	110	216
	Disagreed	7	10	51	3	10	9	7	9	106	
<i>Q 2</i> <i>Proposed definition</i>	Agreed	18	0	98	5	5	8	5	2	141	204
	Disagreed	1	10	22		7	8	6	7	63	
<i>Q 3</i> <i>Domain Structure</i>	Agreed	10	1	64	2	4	10	5	5	101	186
	Disagreed		2	7		3	3	1	2	18	
	No Indication	9	5	37	2	5	3	4	2	67	
<i>Q 4</i> <i>Definitions for interpreting competencies</i>	Agreed	9	2	69	2	7	14	5	4	112	181
	Disagreed	2	2	16		3	2	2	5	32	
	No Indication	8	4	19	2	1		3		37	
<i>Q 5</i> <i>Definitions for interpreting notes</i>	Agreed	13	1	68	2	7	12	6	4	113	181
	Disagreed		2	13		2	4	1	2	24	
	No Indication	6	5	24	2	3		2	2	11	
<i>Q 6</i> <i>Domain 1</i>	Agreed	16	4	90	4	8	10	9	2	143	168
	Recommendations		3	11		1	4	1	4	25	
<i>Q 7</i> <i>Domain 2</i>	Agreed	16	7	94	4	7	11	8	3	150	166
	Recommendations		1	5		2	3	1	4	16	
<i>Q 8</i> <i>Domain 3</i>	Agreed	13	5	89		7	10	7	3	138	161
	Recommendations	1	3	9	1	2	2	2	3	22	
<i>Q 9</i> <i>Domain 4</i>	Agreed	14	3	89	3	8	11	7	2	137	163
	Recommendations	1	5	8	1	1	2	2	5	25	
<i>Q 10</i> <i>Domain 5</i>	Agreed	11		17	4	5	7	4	1	110	157
	Recommendations	3	7	17		3	5	5	6	46	
<i>Q 11</i> <i>Future-proofing the competencies</i>	Agreed	4	1	45	3	4	7	4	2	70	169
	Disagreed	2	3	8		5	2	2	5	27	
	Not sure	9	4	46	1	1	6	3	1	71	

While there was a high level of support for the underpinning intent of the proposal to improve workforce flexibility through broadening the range of activities that could be undertaken by the anaesthetic technician workforce, many respondents did not agree with the strategies proposed by the Council to achieve that.

A significant percentage of respondents raised concerns about the proposal to use the title of *Perioperative Practitioner* especially as this could cause confusion with other similarly titled scopes of practice within other health professions and suggested a higher level of independence in practice.

A number of concerns were also raised in terms of the proposed scope definition with a common theme being that the scope description suggested a higher level of independence in providing patient care, rather than an extension of the range of activities that could be undertaken.

Respondents were generally supportive of the proposed five-domain structure for the articulation of competence standards, with recommendations for the re-wording of a number of the competencies (especially in relation to respondent's disagreement with the revised scope definition and change of title).

Council Decision

The Council has taken account of the varied feedback provided by consultation respondents with particular note given to concerns raised in respect of the proposed title of *Perioperative Practitioner* and the articulation of the level of practice independence within the scope description statement.

Feedback from a number of group submissions suggesting that improving the flexibility of the anaesthetic technician workforce could be achieved in different ways rather than a wholesale change to the current scope definition and title is acknowledged by the Council.

In response to the consultation feedback the Council has decided to take the following steps:

1. There will be no change to the current title of *Anaesthetic Technician* nor to the described practice parameters for this scope of practice at this point in time. The Council will continue to investigate other options with a view to enabling a more flexible and responsive Anaesthetic Technician scope of practice. As a first step, a review of the current framework for expanded practice will be undertaken.
2. The proposed *Competence Standards for Perioperative Practitioners in Aotearoa New Zealand* have been revised so as to apply to the unchanged Anaesthetic Technician scope of practice. The revised competence standards are aligned to the current gazetted definition of the Anaesthetic Technician scope of practice. It is of note that these competencies do include an expectation that newly graduated Anaesthetic Technicians will have foundational knowledge of other perioperative roles (such as post-surgical care, scrubbing and circulating) but are not expected to undertake those procedures.
3. A copy of the *Competence Standards for Anaesthetic Technicians in Aotearoa New Zealand (Revised March 2018)* can be downloaded from the Council's website www.msccouncil.org.nz
4. The Council noted concerns raised within some of the consultation submissions in respect of the work currently being undertaken by the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) to move the current qualification in anaesthetic technology from a diploma to a bachelor level. Of particular concern for respondents was the potential impact this change could have on the Anaesthetic Technician workforce especially during the transitional phase.

The Council will continue to consult with and advise the AUT on its requirements for a qualification to meet accreditation standards, with a critical factor being that the design and content of the programme is informed by the competence standards for Anaesthetic Technicians as set by the Council.

The Council agrees that having appropriate transitional strategies in place during the change management process will be a vital undertaking for the AUT, including a transparent and timely communication programme with employers and other relevant stakeholders.