



**MEDICAL SCIENCES COUNCIL
OF NEW ZEALAND**

TE KAUNIHERA PŪTAIAO HAUORA O AOTEAROA

CONSULTATION OUTCOMES:

Review of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Standards for Medical Laboratory Science Practitioners

In November 2018 the Medical Sciences Council issued a consultation document proposing a number of changes to the CPD standards for medical laboratory science practitioners.

This report summarises the consultation feedback received by the Council and their subsequent decisions as to the revised CPD standards for medical laboratory science practitioners

APRIL 2019

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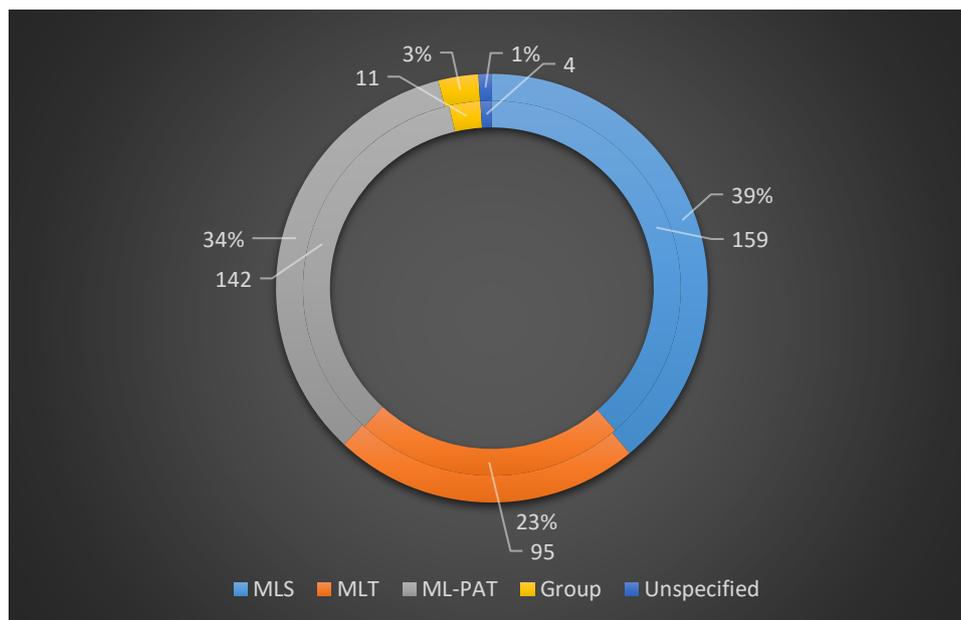
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Introduction

The Medical Sciences Council would like to take this opportunity to extend its thanks and appreciation to those individuals and groups who provided feedback on its recent (November 2018) consultation document that set out a number of proposals in respect of the standards for continuing professional development (CPD) for medical laboratory science practitioners.

Consultation Response Rate

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



An Overview of Consultation Feedback

Question	Response
1. Do you agree with the proposal that providers of CPD programmes are to be based in New Zealand?	Of the 404 respondents who answered this question, 73% agreed with the proposal
2. Do you support the proposal that all medical laboratory science practitioners will be required to complete a minimum of 40 hours CPD over a 2-year cycle?	406 respondents answered this question, with 68% disagreeing with the proposal
3. Do you support the proposal to move to a 2-year CPD cycle?	Of the 401 respondents who answered this question, 63% agreed with the proposal
4. Do you support the proposal for CPD to be categorised as substantive and general CPD activities?	394 respondents answered this question, with 52% agreeing with the proposal

Council Decision

The Council noted that, with the exception of the proposal to apply an across-the-board requirement for all medical laboratory science practitioners to complete a minimum of 40-hours CPD over a 2-year cycle, respondents were generally supportive of the other three proposals:

- Providers of CPD programmes to be based in New Zealand
- CPD to be based on a 2-year cycle
- CPD activities to be categorised as *substantive* and *general*

Having given due consideration to all of the consultation feedback, the Council resolved to make the following revisions to the CPD standards for medical laboratory science practitioners:

Providers of CPD programmes to be based in New Zealand

Having CPD programme providers domiciled in New Zealand will more readily allow for the Council to maintain an ongoing programme of consultation and liaison with providers and within a cost-efficient framework.

The Medical Sciences Council resolved that its CPD standards will be revised to include a requirement that CPD programme providers seeking Council approval for recognition of their programme, will be based in New Zealand.

CPD to be based on a 2-year cycle

The Medical Sciences Council resolved that CPD for medical laboratory science practitioners is to be based on a 2-year cycle. The Council will need to amend its CPD standards document to reflect this change.

Many practitioners saw a 2-year cycle as more enabling in terms of managing their CPD in that it still allows for a period of “catch-up” should a practitioner experience difficulties with meeting their full CPD requirements in any 1-year.

CPD activities to be categorised as substantive and general

The Medical Sciences Council resolved that the revised standards for CPD will require the reporting of CPD activities to be classified as *substantive CPD* and *general CPD*.

It was noted that several consultation respondents suggested that more detailed information on the two categories of CPD activities would be helpful. Practitioners are expected to manage their CPD through enrolling in a CPD programme approved by the Council, and those providers will be responsible for ensuring the programmes offered to medical laboratory science practitioners meet the Council’s CPD standards. That will include ensuring practitioners enrolled in a CPD programme are provided with sufficient information in terms of substantive and general CPD activities (inclusive of examples).

The Council is now in the process of developing a set of standards specifically for providers of CPD programmes and will liaise with providers to advise on the Council’s requirements in respect of substantive and general CPD activities. It will ultimately be the responsibility of each approved CPD provider to ensure practitioners enrolled in their particular CPD programme are well informed in respect of substantive and general CPD activities.

The minimum amount of required CPD hours will be different for the medical laboratory science scopes of practice

The Council has taken cognisance of the lack of support from consultation respondents in respect of the proposal to apply an across-the-spectrum requirement of 40-hours of CPD for all medical laboratory science scopes of practice. It is acknowledged that the proposed increase in the minimum amount of required CPD hours for medical laboratory technicians and medical laboratory pre-analytical technicians could place undue pressure on practitioners both at an individual level and an employment level. However the Council is not satisfied that the current level of 8-hours CPD per year is a sufficient measure of practitioners’ ongoing professional development and learning.

Consequently, while the Council resolved to increase the minimum amount of CPD required for medical laboratory technicians and medical laboratory pre-analytical technicians, it was agreed that this would be to a lesser amount than that proposed in the November 2018 consultation document.

The minimum amount of CPD hours required for each of the gazetted scopes of practice for the profession of medical laboratory science will be:

Scope of Practice (inclusive of both provisional and full registration)	Minimum Amount of CPD per 2-Year Cycle	Minimum Amount of CPD in Any 1-Year
Medical Laboratory Scientist	40 hours	15 hours
Medical Laboratory Technician	24 hours	9 hours
Medical Laboratory Pre-Analytical Technician	24 hours	9 hours

Timing of the Changes to the CPD Standards

While the Council is yet to confirm the exact date as to when the changes to the CPD standards for medical laboratory science practitioners will come into effect, it is expected that they will not happen until 2020 at the earliest.

As a next step the Council will develop a set of standards for providers of CPD programmes and meet with both current and prospective providers to discuss and confirm those. Those discussions will include consideration of the amount of time providers will need to make any necessary adaptations to their programmes so as to meet the revised standards.

The Council will keep practitioners, employers, and programme providers updated through ongoing newsletters and email alerts.