



## Te Heamana - Te Manahautū

### Message from the Chair

Tēnā koutou katoa

As we head into the colder season and look forward to Matariki, it's good to reflect on what the Council has been working on and achieved this year.

As practitioners you will have applied for your practising certificate (APC) for the 2026-2027 year, and done so on the website, engaging with our new practitioner management system. I hope that you found this straightforward to use and that your practising certificate was processed promptly. The Medical Sciences Secretariat (MSS – who manage our business services) was pleased to inform the Council of the overall success of this system with 93% of applications being processed immediately. For those applications which required manual review, the median processing time was 1.22 days from the time of application. While there were a few things that practitioners contacted the staff about, overall, this process was much smoother and more efficient than in previous years.

In April 2025, the revised anaesthetic technician scope of practice came into effect. Now the accompanying guidelines, accreditation standards, and policies are being revised along with consultation occurring around matters such as the sedation standards.

The medical laboratory science scope of practice consultation has now closed. Thanks to all those who took the time to consider these proposals carefully and respond. The Council is working through the consultation feedback and will inform practitioners of its decisions once they have been made. It's important that the direction and decisions are correct as this will influence practice, now and in the future.

When this newsletter is published, I will have attended the Māori practitioner's hui in Wellington on 19 June. This was led by Te Ama Tōtika in partnership with the Medical Sciences Council. I'm thrilled to be able to attend this second hui and want to acknowledge all the mahi that has taken place by the Te Ama Tōtika rūpū. The Council is very appreciative of the skills this group brings and their dedication to the work they do for us. I hope this hui is well attended and those that do attend find it valuable.

Mānawatia a Matariki

Ngā mihi nui

**Ruth Beeston**  
Chair



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# Te Heamana - Te Manahautū

## Message from the Chief Executive



Tēnā koutou katoa

Once again, the Medical Sciences Secretariat (MSS) staff are preparing for the recertification audit for practitioners regulated by the Council. As you will know and understand, every two years a number of practitioners from both professions regulated by the Council are selected, and their engagement in professional development is audited against policy. This is done to ensure the primary purpose of the Act - 'to protect the health and safety of the public by making sure that health practitioners are maintaining continuing professional development to ensure they are competent and fit to practise in their profession' - is being met.

Engagement in the audit this year will occur via the online portal. Feedback from those practitioners who have already used the portal for audit is that it's much more streamlined than in the past.

The Council recently underwent a Ministry mandated performance review. The report will be posted on our website soon and I encourage you to read it. The review measures performance against section 118 of the Health Practitioner Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act). This section lists the functions of the Authority. The review and report are positive, demonstrating that the Council achieves its purpose.

There are three low risk recommendations, and I am pleased to advise that the team are already working through the requirements with some changes having been implemented.

As you may be aware the Act was recently tabled in Parliament as an amendment bill. The Council is actively monitoring this legislation's progress through the House and will decide whether to make a submission on the proposed changes.

I encourage you to take the time to consider the proposed amendments to the legislation that directly impact you as a regulated health professional in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Finally, thank you once again for the mahi that you all undertake daily. Your work directly impacts people receiving care. If you have any questions about matters related to your regulation as a health professional, please contact my team.

Ngā mihi nui - **Dr Susan Calvert, Chief Executive, Medical Sciences Secretariat**

## Government propose changes to the Act

On 18 May, the Government introduced an amendment bill (the Bill) proposing changes to the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act).

You can read the full amendment bill here: [Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Amendment Bill | New Zealand Legislation](#)

## Consideration - impact of the Bill

The Minister of Health, Simeon Brown, has been clear about the purpose of the Bill – it's intended to 'better align health workforce regulation with patient needs, health system policy, and Government priorities'.

The Government considers the current system too fragmented and insufficiently aligned with wider health system priorities. The Bill reflects the Government's stated intention of moving toward greater central oversight and control, stronger

protection for those people accessing health services and consistency in regulatory settings.

**Minister:** The Bill proposes to give the Minister more responsibility over what the Council does.

**New review committee:** A new committee could review and overturn decisions about a practitioner's registration or scope of practice. The cost of running this committee will likely be paid by practitioners through their fees.

**Conduct matters:** Professional conduct (not just clinical competence) will be explicitly incorporated into registration and practising certificate decisions.

**Interim suspension:** Regulators may suspend a practising certificate or place conditions on it straight away without warning if they believe there's a risk of serious harm due to concerns about a practitioner's competence.

**Patient voice:** The Bill emphasises that regulators must seek the view of 'patient' groups.

**Restorative justice/conciliation:** Some disciplinary cases can be handled through a restorative justice or agreed resolution process if it suits the situation, and everyone involved agrees.

**Cultural competence:** The Bill still requires the Council to set standards for cultural competence, but it removes specific reference to skills for working effectively and respectfully with Māori.

**Crown entity:** The Bill means the Council would have to follow some of the rules and requirements that apply to Crown entities.

## Next steps

The Bill is at the very start of its Parliamentary journey. It's just had its first reading (and referral to a select committee). The Council will make a submission to the Select Committee, and encourage practitioners to submit as well.

Select Committee hearings and amendments inevitably follow before the Bill progresses to its second and third readings. Only then does it become law.

## Te Ama Tōtika

### Hui

The Council and Te Ama Tōtika recently hosted a hui for Māori practitioners. It was a great opportunity for the Council to introduce Te Ama Tōtika and its mahi, including how matters relating to culture are raised and addressed. It also aimed to promote whakawhanaungatanga and facilitate connections between Māori practitioners.

Attending practitioners provided valuable insight into their own experiences as Māori, and the impact of clinical and cultural standards required of medical laboratory science and anesthetic technology practitioners in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Council and Te Ama Tōtika extend thanks to all practitioners who attended the hui and acknowledge the valuable mahi that was completed. For more about the purpose of the hui, view the website [News item](#).

*The Council's Māori practitioners advisory committee is made up of practitioners from the different scopes of practice, and some lay members. They assist with reviewing key standards and codes of conduct, inform the Council about policy changes required to ensure practitioners have the competencies to enable effective interaction with Māori, and advise on related matters as per section 118 of the Act. For more about them, view our website details under About us/Māori Practitioners Advisory Committee.*

## Express interest - writing questions and answers for the exam

Are you interested in writing questions and answers (Q&As) for the online examinations?

The Council is hosting an information session at 12 noon, on 29 July for people **interested in writing Q&As** for the medical laboratory scientist (MLS) and anaesthetic technician (AT) examinations - and how to do this. You can **register** for this [here](#):

We're looking for practitioners from a variety of practise settings to contribute to the Q&A library. Q&A writers are paid for each question that's accepted.

cont.,

**To qualify...** practitioners should be registered, have a current practising certificate, and be in good standing with the Council. Familiarity with the competence standards and working with students and new graduates would be an advantage.

## More information

Keep checking the website and your email for more details, and when to **express interest**.

## Exam committee meet

The medical laboratory science (MLS) and the anaesthetic technician (AT) online exam committees got together on 27 May 2026. This was a reconfiguration of the exam committee structure and welcomed new members.

The MLS and AT groups met to discuss background details of the exam. And to reinforce the governance role.

The MLS exam committee met a second time on 11 June to discuss question rotation, and suitable replacement of questions for the upcoming August exam.

## Doing an online exam is only offered if...

- you hold a relevant qualification in AT or MLS, combined with relevant and specialised AT or medical laboratory science experience.
- your application is reviewed, and it's deemed that your qualification is not substantially equivalent to the required New Zealand standard.
- people may be invited to sit the exam - it cannot be requested.

## More information

For more about the online exam, view details on the website under Pre-registration / Online examination. There's a lot of information there, including eligibility, how to sit the online exam, exam dates, how to enrol, the exam candidate handbook, and online testing requirements.

## Working in isolation

**A reminder for all practitioners** across the motu to make sure you always act within the scope of practice for your profession. Know what you're allowed to do, and what you're not allowed to do.

We understand that sometimes you may feel pressure to take on tasks outside your role, especially if there are staff shortages, or you work in a smaller community where there aren't enough people to cover all roles in a health service.

However, **you should only do tasks that you are competent to perform**, and that fall within your scope of practice. If you're unsure about what you can or can't do, or whether a task is within your scope, please contact us by email and we can provide guidance.

**msc@medsci.co.nz**

## Most APCs processed immediately

The 2026-2027 Annual Practising Certificate (APC) run went well. Particularly because, for most, this was the first use of the Council's new practitioner database.

## Medical laboratory science practitioners

The Council received and processed 3,741 applications from medical laboratory science practitioners - this was made up of:

- 1,869 Medical Laboratory Scientists (MLS)
- 745 Medical Laboratory Technicians (MLT)
- 1,127 Medical Laboratory Pre-Analytical Technicians (MLPAT)

This amounted to 91% of medical laboratory science practitioners who held a 2025-2026 practising certificate, and renewed for the 2026-2027 year.



## Anaesthetic technicians

The Council received and processed 1,040 applications received from anaesthetic technicians (AT) which resulted in 95% of ATs who held a 2025-2026 practising certificate renewed for the 2026-2027 practising year.

### Average processing times

On average, all MSC applications were processed immediately. Where manual intervention was required applications were processed within one day. This included reviewing 214 declarations (information about health, conduct, or any other matter) made by MLS practitioners. And 80 made by AT practitioners.

## Practising without an APC - a risk to us all

We've recently been made aware that some new graduates are practising without an Annual Practising Certificate (APC). This is a risk to us all, not least the public/people using those healthcare services. It can also lead to disciplinary processes.

We all have a part to play in making sure this doesn't happen, and to educate practitioners about making sure they apply for their first and subsequent APCs when the time comes.

### **You must have a current APC to work in any scope of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand.**

There's information about the process, and a long list of Frequently Asked Questions that will help with any queries about APCs, on the website under Already registered – Annual Practising Certificate (APC).

If, after reading the website information, anyone still has a query, or a concern, please get in touch by emailing [msc@medsci.co.nz](mailto:msc@medsci.co.nz) or phone +64 4 801 6250.

## Consultations and policies

### **Medical laboratory science - scope of practice**

Thank you to everyone who took the time to send in a submission. We received over 110, which the

Council is still reviewing. We also received 18 submissions about advanced and extended practice. We are also meeting with groups to inform Council's decision making. Work is ongoing to update the competence standards, and these will be shared for consultation later.

For more about this consultation view details on the website under [News – Consultation: Medical Sciences Council scope of practice review – Medical Laboratory Science and Advanced-Extended practice.](#)

### **Anaesthetic technician - accreditation standards**

The accreditation standards for education providers have been reviewed with feedback, and work is now underway to improve how these standards are monitored. This helps make sure the qualifications needed for registration stay relevant and fit for purpose.

For more about this consultation, view details on the website under [News – Consultation: Anaesthetic technician accreditation standards.](#)

### **Anaesthetic technician - sedation standard**

The Council has kept working with stakeholders to improve the standard based on consultation feedback. It is being updated to make the requirements clearer for people working in this area. There will be another round of consultation before this work is complete.

For more about this consultation, view details on the website under [News - Consultation: ATs safe sedation standard.](#)

## Policies

The following policies have been updated since February 2026. You'll find them on the website – if you need help, use the search function:

- [Online examination](#)
- [Practising certificates – AT](#)
- [Practising certificates – MLS](#)
- [Recertification \(CPD\) – AT](#)
- [Recertification \(CPD\) – MLS](#)
- [Substance use management](#)



## Update - AT supervision

We've received feedback that information about anaesthetic technician (AT) supervision guidance on our website isn't clear enough. Because of this, we've removed the following:

- the 2025 April – AT Supervisor Report (condition) form
- the 2025 January - AT Supervision as a condition Policy.

We're also planning to combine the AT graduate guidance and the Internationally qualified practitioners forms.

In addition, we may create a new page on our website specifically about AT supervision. Keep checking the News items for an update coming soon.



## Keeping your information safe

We take your privacy seriously and work hard to keep your information secure. The Council has clear policies in place to make sure personal details are collected, stored, and used responsibly.

You'll find full details in the Management of Personal Information Policy on the Council website under Resources and publications – Registration.

This policy explains what information is collected, how it's used, and how it may appear on the public register.

It also outlines your role as a practitioner.

It's important that you:

- Keep your personal information up to date
- Notify the Council if your details change
- Know that you can request access to your personal information at any time.

By working together, we can ensure your information remains accurate, protected, and used appropriately.

## 2024-2025 Annual report

The 2024–2025 Annual Report is now available on our website under Resources and publications.

Mā te mahi mō te painga o te katoa ka whakanui mātou i tā mātou kawenga mahi ki te mahi tika mō te painga o te tangata.

By acting for the benefit of the whole we honour our collective responsibility to do what's right for the benefit of people.

The report covers:

- Our year
- How we are governed
- Our people
- Our key priorities
- Our performance
- Our financial results.

It also includes 'information at a glance', which highlights key data and information about the areas of practice within medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology. For example:

### Medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology - overview



We are  
**1 of 18**  
Responsible  
Authorities (RAs)

Regulating  
**2**  
professions that  
include  
**7**  
scopes of  
practice

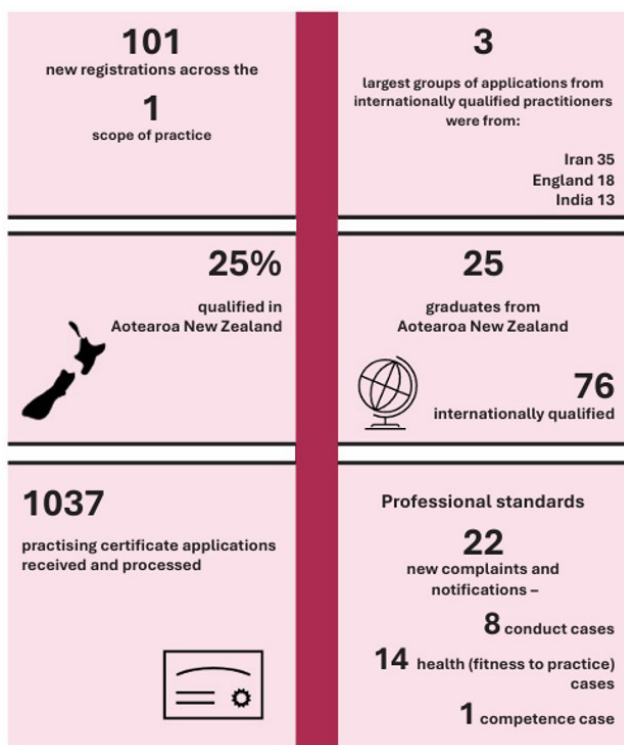
About  
**5059**  
Practising health  
professionals/  
practitioners as at  
31 March 2025



## Medical laboratory science - workforce during 2024-2025



## Anaesthetic technology - workforce during 2024-2025



## Recertification audit

### Retaining competence - keeping up to date

The Council's recertification programme is established under section 41 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act).

### Continue practising safely, effectively, and legally

Once you're registered and hold an annual practising certificate (APC) you must engage in continuing professional development (CPD) – ongoing learning – and keep proof of what you've done.

### 2026 audit

Every two years we take a random selection of practitioners for auditing. This is to make sure CPD is happening, and you're complying with policy.

This 2026 audit will commence in mid-July and covers the period from January 2024 to December 2025.

Practitioners who are selected will be advised by email.

For more information about this, view details on the website under Already registered / Recertification – continuing professional development (CPD). Content includes Frequently Asked Questions.

## How's the website working for you?

We've recently updated our search function—have you had a chance to try it out?

We're now planning a full review of the website to understand what's working well and what we could improve. Your thoughts will help us make the site better for everyone. If you have a few minutes, please complete our short survey and tell us about your experience:

### [Website review survey](#)

Thanks for sharing your feedback—we really appreciate it!

# Who 'we' are and what we do

The website is available for everyone: practitioners (registered or otherwise), employers, the public, users of healthcare services.

There's more on there than a login to the practitioner system and the public register (who's a registered practitioner).

For instance:

- Annual Practising Certificate (APC) and fees - what it is, who needs it and why (you must have a current APC to work in any scope of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand), when, and how to apply.
- Raising a concern – what you need to know as a member of the public, a registered practitioner, or an employer - and recent decisions made by the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (HPDT).
- Accreditation standards - meeting education standards, obtaining accreditation, accredited programmes, and monitoring. And yes, there's an accreditation policy.
- International practitioners - how to apply to register if you're living overseas and planning to work in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- How to register if you're a graduate – find out if you're eligible for registration.



## Get in touch - find out more

You'll find most things on the website

**[www.msccouncil.org.nz](http://www.msccouncil.org.nz)**

but if you want to get in touch, please email the team at

**[msc@medsci.co.nz](mailto:msc@medsci.co.nz)**

- you can also phone +64 4 801 6250.