

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Last updated 11 March 2025

Scope of practice and competence standards

What has changed?

The scope of practice and competence standards have been updated to reflect practice in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to allow practitioners to better meet the needs of the New Zealand population. They can be found [here](#). These come into effect on 1 April 2025.

Those activities covered in the expanded practice policy and definition are now considered to be part of the scope of practice. Please note, if you currently have an expanded practice activity noted on your practising certificate, this will be removed to reflect the updated scope of practice - you can continue to practise as you currently are. Please ensure you read the new notice of scope of practice. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at msc@medsci.co.nz

Why has the Council made these changes?

Like many health professions, the practice of anaesthetic technology continues to evolve in a way that reflects changes in the New Zealand population, workforce, and health priorities. The scope of practice and competence standards must keep pace with these changes to make sure practitioners are equipped to provide safe care to the public, now and into the future. Review of the scope and competencies are part of a regular review process.

Why does the Council set the scope of practice and standards?

The Council is required to under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act).

What does this mean for me and my practice?

Practitioners may continue to practice as usual. The scope of practice and competence standards come into effect on 1 April 2025. Most practitioners won't notice any change but should review the documents to ensure they are still practising within the scope, and in accordance with the competence standards.

Please note, if you currently have an expanded practice activity noted on your practising certificate, this will be removed to reflect the updated scope of practice - rest assured you can continue to practise as you currently are.

What documents should I follow now?

Continue to follow the 2012 [Notice of Scope of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications for the Practice of Anaesthetic Technology](#) until the new notice comes into effect on 1 April 2025 (it's on the website under *Resources/Secondary legislation/Gazette notices (Notice No.2025 s/1321)* [here](#)). The Council will remind all practitioners about this change before it comes into effect.

Are there going to be more changes?

We regularly review all policies to make sure they're current and aligned with the scope of practice. This is standard practice.

Who did the Council engage with while undertaking this process?

The Council conducted two public consultations and directly engaged with several groups - these included:

- Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauoroa
- Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora
- practitioner membership groups (both anaesthetic technicians and other related professions)
- practitioner unions (both anaesthetic technicians and other related professions)
- professional colleges
- Te Ama Tōtika (Māori practitioner advisory group)
- education providers
- employers
- other responsible authorities
- individual anaesthetic technicians and subject matter experts
- we established an expert advisory group.

Is there a pathway regarding PACU (Post Anaesthetic Care Unit)

The Council doesn't provide education programmes. Most employers will have a programme for people to learn and develop skills in this area (PACU – where patients come out of their anaesthetic). The scope of practice is supporting you to work in this area, however you need to have the appropriate education and supervision to go on and develop further.

Is completion of resuscitation education a required standard?

Everyone is expected to have resuscitation skills and maintain them/make sure they're used appropriately. What's changed is that we've taken the course name out of the standards. ATs must retain resuscitation skills as part of their Continual Professional Development (CPD) requirements. There are many providers for this education.

What restrictions are there for ATs when administering medications?

Anaesthetic Technicians do not administer any medications they're not instructed to. The instruction to administer can be given by a verbal or written prescription or from a standing order. ATs must also make sure when administering medicines that they comply with the organisational policies, guidelines, and procedures.