New Zealand
Medical Radiation
Technologists Board
*Te Poari Ringa Hangarau Iraruke*

# Medical radiation technology scope of practice review outcome

August 2026

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# Executive Summary

Te Poari Ringa Hangarau Iraruke | The Medical Radiation Technologists Board has been undertaking a review of the scopes of practice and prescribed qualifications for the practice of medical imaging and radiation therapy.

To inform this work, the Board has investigated how medical imaging and radiation therapy is managed internationally, established an expert advisory group of practitioners to provide advice to the Board, engaged with professional bodies and practitioner groups, and undertaken a public consultation. The Board extends its thanks to all practitioners and stakeholders who have taken the time to engage with the process and share their views. A summary of the feedback received during the consultation is available on the Board's website.

The Board has considered all the feedback received and has approved the updated the scopes of practice which will come into effect on 1 April 2027. The main structural changes are:

- Ending of the Trainee scopes for Nuclear Medicine Technologists (NMT), Sonographers (SON) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists (MRIT)
- Awarding endorsements on practice for practitioners working in parts of another scope
- Inclusion of diagnostic CT in the Nuclear Medicine Technologist scope
- Recognition of undergraduate education pathways for Nuclear Medicine Technologists, Sonographers and Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists.

The Board has also reviewed the descriptions of the scopes and aligned the scope wording where appropriate, including alignment of registration pathways.

The changes affect some scopes of practice more than others and the Board will be communicating with those affected over the next few months. All practitioners will be able to continue practising while the changes are implemented.

The Board is also undertaking a review of policy which supports the scope of practice, such as the registration and supervision policies. Consultation with the profession and stakeholders is planned to ensure that practitioner and stakeholder input is considered in their development.

# Background

Te Poari Ringa Hangarau Iraruke | The Medical Radiation Technologists Board is responsible for protecting the health and safety of New Zealanders by ensuring practitioners registered in the profession of medical imaging and radiation therapy are competent and fit to practise.

The Board is required to set the scopes of practice and prescribed qualifications and is required by the Ministry of Health to review these regularly.

The Board has been undertaking a review of the scopes of practice and prescribed qualifications for Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy practitioners. The Board regularly

reviews the scopes of practice to ensure they remain fit for purpose and reflective of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand both now and into the future. In reviewing the scopes, the Board has been guided by the following:

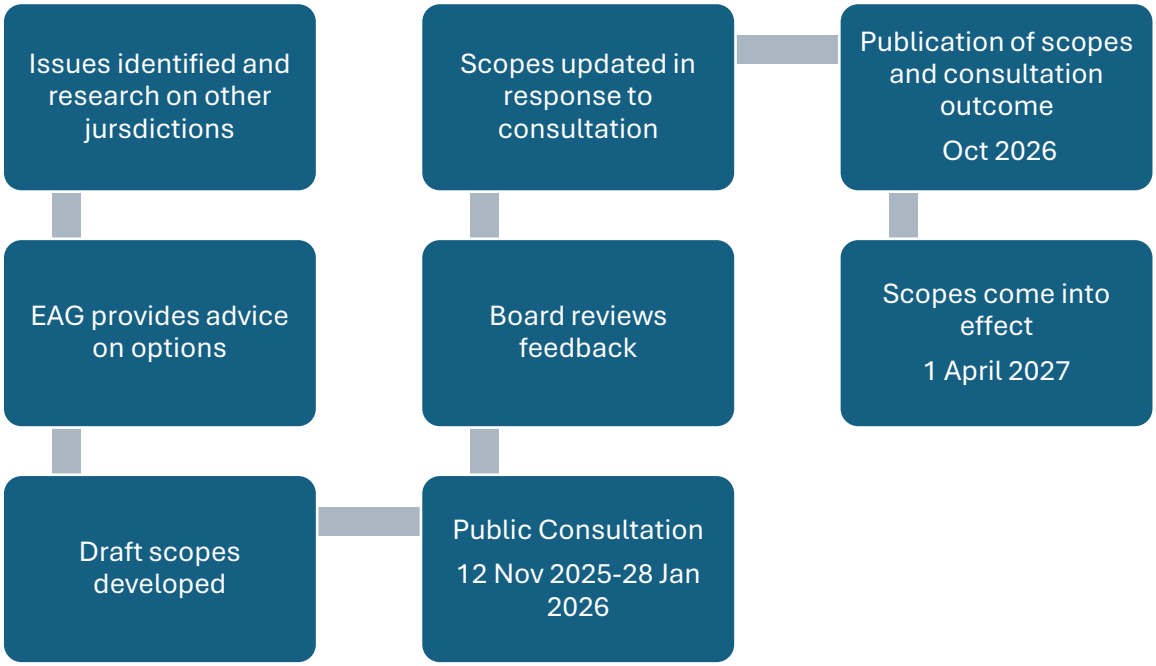
- The primary purpose is to protect the health and safety of the public.
- The updated scopes are reflective of practice both now and into the future.
- Regulatory settings are proportionate and are not acting as an unwarranted barrier to service flexibility and delivery.
- There is alignment between the scopes wherever possible.
- The register is clear to the public about the types of imaging or therapy a practitioner is competent to perform or deliver.

The Board is also mindful of the influence of rapidly evolving technology in the profession and the changes in role that practitioners are navigating through changing models of care.

This document is divided into sections describing the process for the review, the outcome, and reasoning for Board decisions. A separate document is available which summarises the submissions received during the public consultation.

# Process for the review

The review process for the scopes began in mid-2024 with research of the issues and expressions of interest sought for an expert advisory group (EAG). The EAG consisted of representatives from each scope and has provided advice for the Board to consider during the development of the scopes.




The Board proposed the following high-level changes to the scope of practice and prescribed qualifications.

1. Ending the three trainee scopes.
2. Review of scope wording.
3. Use of endorsements to recognise additional education.
4. Addition of potential undergraduate education pathways for
    - o Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Technologist
    - o Sonographer (Son)
    - o Nuclear Medicine Technologist (NMT).
5. Alignment of qualifications.

Public consultation on the proposals was undertaken from 12 November 2025 to 28 January 2026. A total of 89 responses were received and considered by the Board. Further detail about the responses is available in the summary of responses available on the Board's website.

As well as the public consultation, the Board also engaged with other stakeholders about the proposed changes. These included education providers, professional associations and colleges and The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia. The Board has also attended practitioner conferences and engaged with practitioners.

# Updated scope of practice and qualifications

The Board is required to publish the Scopes of Practice and prescribed qualifications in the New Zealand Gazette. This notice is designated as secondary legislation developed under section 11 and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ('the Act'). The Board has published the notice with an effective date of 1 April 2027 to allow the Board and practitioners time to prepare for the changes.

The Board has approved five (5) scopes of practice:

- Medical Imaging Technologist (MIT)
- Radiation Therapist (RT)
- Nuclear Medicine Technologist (NMT)
- Sonographer (SON)
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologist (MRIT)

The updated notice is available from the Board's website and published in the NZ Gazette (www.gazette.govt.nz).

# Associated work

The Board has been reviewing policy supporting the Scope of Practice to ensure alignment with the updated scope. This includes registration and supervision policies. Consultation on these policies will occur with the profession and stakeholders prior to the scope coming into effect.

The Board has also been progressing several associated pieces of work along with the scope of practice. These include a review of the competency standards completed in September 2024, accreditation of a PET-CT programme and recognition as an endorsement, and a review of the requirements for holding a practising certificate. Work on developing a standard for practitioners involved in remote and hybrid imaging models of care has also occurred, as well as a review of the Board examination.

# Board decisions

## Ending of the Trainee scopes

The Board has decided that registration into the Trainee scopes will cease on 1 April 2027.

The Board carefully considered the consultation feedback regarding both the retention and ending of the scopes. The Trainee scopes are for those who are enrolled in a programme of education leading to registration as a Nuclear Medicine Technologist, Sonographer or Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologist. Most practitioners in these scopes are enrolled in the accredited programmes.

Those who favoured retention of the scopes stated that they were concerned about ensuring adequate supervision occurred during the education period, oversight of trainee numbers for workforce planning purposes, and clarity of roles for the public. Those who were supportive of ending the scopes submitted that Trainees are already monitored by the education provider and supervised by registered clinical supervisors, and that the Board does not register other students.

The supervision and monitoring of students in education is primarily the responsibility of the education provider, and the Act does not support the registration of students. This is consistent with the Board's position on those enrolled in education leading to registration as a Medical Imaging Technologist or Radiation Therapist. The lack of a minimum standard of competence for trainee scopes gives limited ability for the Board to take any action under the Act, and supervision of practitioners undertaking education is more appropriately managed by the education provider. The Board has oversight of the supervision requirements through the accreditation standards, and the number of enrolments in each of the programmes is regularly reported to the Board. Responsibility for those who are undertaking a non-accredited programme of study (eg, Australian-based education programmes) rests with the supervising practitioner and employer as the Board has no oversight of non-accredited programmes.

In practice, this will mean that those who are engaged in a programme of education will no longer be required to be registered or hold a practising certificate in the trainee scope. Practitioners registered in another scope while studying must obtain and maintain a practising certificate for this scope if they are working within their original scope during their education.

The Board will be engaging with those most affected by this change, including currently registered trainees, employers, education providers, prospective students and practitioner groups. This will ensure that people are aware of the requirements and their responsibilities.

## Scope wording review

As a result of the review the scope wording has been updated for each of the scopes.

The five scopes encompass the profession of Medical Radiation Technology[1] as described in the Act. The introductory paragraph states the empowering provision for the development of the scopes. The profession of medical radiation technology section describes the practices of medical imaging and radiation therapy. This section describes the common expectations of practice and areas that practitioners may work in across the scopes. Each scope then has a specific description. Where appropriate, the wording of each scope has been aligned between the scopes to ensure consistency.

The scopes are designed to allow for practitioners to perform activities within the scope, where their competence and education allows. The Board recognises that many practitioners may become proficient in a specific field or technique over time and may not practise in all areas of the scope at any one time.

Specific updates to the wording in response to the consultation are listed below:

| **Scope** | **Update** | **Reasoning** |
|---|---|---|
| All | Addition of section allowing all scopes to administer contrast media. | Practitioners within all scopes may administer contrast media where they have the appropriate education and competence to do so, and in accordance with workplace policies and procedures |
| MIT, NMT, SON, MRIT | Expansion on what form the outcome of an examination may take. | Recognition that the outcome of the examination may take many forms including static or moving images, additional image analysis or reporting performed as part of the examination or by the practitioner. |
| MIT | Removal of section detailing which areas and procedures are included in MIT scope. | The naming of specific areas and procedures risked limiting the scope to only those included in the list. |

[1] An amendment to the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act has been introduced to Parliament on 18 May 2026. A part of this proposes changing the name of the Medical Radiation Technologists Board to the Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board of New Zealand. The amendment also proposes changing the name of the profession for which the Board is responsible from Medical Radiation Technology to Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| NMT | Diagnostic CT included in the scope. | Most practitioners in the scope already may safely perform diagnostic CT (currently recorded as an enabling condition). Those who cannot perform diagnostic CT will have this listed as a condition on their scope of practice. |
| SON | Removal of the term 'convey' | To provide clarity about the requirement for sonographers to communicate the findings of the examination. |
| SON | Addition of Obstetric/ Gynaecological ultrasound as a specific discipline | Recognition of those who hold a specific qualification which enables practice in Obstetric/ Gynaecological ultrasound only. |

The Board will be contacting practitioners who are specifically affected by the changes in scope to explain what action (if any) needs to be taken as a result.

## Use of endorsements to recognise further education

Changes in technology and practice have enabled some practitioners to undertake education in related elements of another scope. This allows recognition of a practitioner's existing knowledge and expertise while extending the services they may safely provide. Submissions were generally in favour of this proposal, if the purpose and requirements for any endorsement are clear.

The Board has decided to recognise additional education publicly as an endorsement on the scope of practice. This is already in place for the MIT scope for practitioners who have completed the PET-CT education programme and the updated scopes have extended this provision to recognise where suitable education has been completed.

The Board will develop a policy for determining programmes that are suitable for recognition as a formal endorsement which will be consulted on in due course.

## Addition of potential undergraduate education pathways for Nuclear Medicine Technologist, Sonographer and Medical Resonance Imaging technologist scopes

The Board has decided to include pathways to allow the registration of NMT, Sonographer and MRIT applications who have completed an accredited undergraduate programme of education, in addition to the existing post-graduate qualification. The inclusion of undergraduate pathways aligns with education models in other countries and may support wider workforce expansion in the longer term as practitioners may enter education programmes for scope as an undergraduate.

Feedback from practitioners and stakeholders indicated concern that this may undermine the current postgraduate scopes, and that the maturity of graduates in these scopes may be lower than currently experienced.

Any education programme developed would be accredited under the same process and standards as the current programme, meaning that graduates would be required to demonstrate the same standard of entry-level competence and knowledge on registration as the current programme. Education programmes are required to provide clinical placements as part of their qualification to familiarise the students with the clinical environment.

The current postgraduate pathways for education are expected to continue, and any potential undergraduate programme would be required to be accredited by the Board prior to the entry of any students.

## Alignment of qualifications

The pathways for registration have been aligned between the scopes. Each scope comprises a pathway for recognition of the qualifications that have been prescribed and accredited by the Board, as well as those for recognition of non-accredited qualifications obtained overseas.

The current accredited qualifications for registration remain unchanged. These are published the Gazette notice as required under Section 12 of the Act and are also published on the Board's website. Graduates of these qualifications may be registered by the Board without further assessment of their qualification or competence.

All scopes have two pathways for the recognition of non-accredited qualifications obtained overseas. Where a qualification (or combination of qualifications) is assessed as substantially equivalent, or as satisfactory as, the New Zealand qualification then they may be offered registration. Where the qualification is assessed as relevant or partially equivalent, an applicant may be offered the opportunity to sit the Board examination. All overseas applicants must meet the Board's competence requirements which include consideration of relevant clinical experience.

The existing Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition of practitioners registered with AHPRA in Australia for Medical Imaging Technologists, Radiation Therapists and Nuclear Medicine Technologists remain unchanged.

The Board is also considering development of a policy which allows for recognition of registration and qualifications that are consistently assessed as substantially equivalent to the New Zealand qualification. This policy will undergo public consultation prior to being considered for finalisation.