



New Zealand
Medical Radiation
Technologists Board
Te Poari Ringa Hangarua Iraruke

CONSULTATION: PRACTISING CERTIFICATES FOR PRACTITIONERS WORKING IN NON-CLINICAL ROLES

October 2015

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Consultation Purpose



The Medical Radiation Technologists Board is seeking feedback from medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners and interested stakeholders on a proposal to introduce a non-clinical practising certificate for practitioners engaged in the profession but working in non-clinical roles such as management, education and/or research.

Background

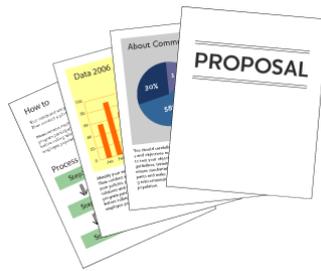


In December 2014 the Medical Radiation Technologists Board published a consultation document seeking feedback on a number of broad-brush issues pertaining to the regulation of the medical imaging and radiation therapy profession.

Of the 515 respondents who answered the question “should practitioners who work in the profession but in a non-clinical role be required to hold a current practising certificate?”, 46% replied “yes” and 54% “no”.

The Board subsequently decided to undertake a further consultation on this topic.

Proposal



The Board is proposing to introduce the issue of a practising certificate for practitioners who are working in a non-clinical role but whose work practice has an impact on the profession of medical imaging and radiation therapy and subsequently may pose a risk of harm to the public.

This proposal is founded on the premise that the practice of medical imaging and radiation therapy goes wider than clinical practice and includes teaching, research, and health management in hospitals, clinics, community and institutional contexts, whether paid or unpaid.

Rationale for Proposal



The primary driver for this proposal is to better protect the safety of the public.

Issue of a current practising certificate is a critical mechanism used by the Board to certify that the holder of that document is competent and fit to practise as a registered practitioner in the profession of medical imaging and radiation therapy.

Currently the Board requires all practitioners seeking issue of a practising certificate to have completed 880-hours of direct-patient-contact hours over the previous 3-year period. This can be difficult to achieve for some practitioners due to the non-direct-clinical nature of their position, and yet they continue to have a significant impact on the delivery and quality of medical imaging and radiation practice with a subsequent potential for risk of harm to the public. Issue of a non-clinical practising certificate would be a mechanism for ensuring practitioners who are working in such roles continue to meet their obligations in demonstrating their ongoing competence and fitness to practise without potential barriers put in the way of their gaining a practising certificate.

Questions and Answers



What is the difference between “clinical” and non-clinical” practice?

For the purpose of clarity the Board proposes to define medical imaging and radiation therapy practice as either “clinical” or “non-clinical”.

Clinical practice is any work undertaken by a medical imaging and/or radiation therapy practitioner that relates to the direct care of an individual patient.

Non-clinical practice is any work undertaken by a medical imaging and/or radiation therapy practitioner that does not relate to the direct care of an individual patient.

Would it be mandatory for all practitioners working solely in a non-clinical role to hold a current practising certificate?

No. However if a practitioner uses any of the scopes of practice titles that are protected under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 then they must hold a current practising certificate.

The titles protected under the Act are:

- Medical Imaging Technologist
- Sonographer
- Radiation Therapist
- Nuclear Medicine Technologist
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Technologist
- Trainee Sonographer
- Trainee Nuclear Medicine Technologist
- Trainee MRI Technologist

What would I have to do if I work in a combination of clinical and non-clinical roles?

If you are engaged in clinical practice then you would need to complete a minimum of 360-hours of direct patient care within the 3-year period immediately preceding the date of your practising certificate application. The 360-hours criteria would apply to each scope of practice in which you are registered and seeking a current practising certificate.

Would holders of a non-clinical practising certificate be required to undertake CPD?

Yes. Continuing professional development is a core mechanism for practitioners to ensure their practice is current and that they are actively engaged in lifelong learning. CPD is critical for protecting the health and safety of the public as they can be assured the practitioner's knowledge is current and reflects best practice within a profession exposed to rapidly changing technology.

Would there be particular competencies articulated for holders of a non-clinical practising certificate?

Yes. It is proposed that if the Board made a final decision to introduce a non-clinical practising certificate, the competencies for each of the gazetted scopes of practice would be revised to include competencies specific to particular non-clinical roles within the profession, such as management, education, and/or research.

Where to from Here?



Please note the notion of introducing a non-clinical practising certificate for medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners is only a proposal and the Board welcomes your feedback to help inform its deliberations and final decision on this matter.

Please Complete a Consultation Questionnaire



An online questionnaire has been loaded onto the Board's website and we look forward to receiving your feedback within the time allocated for this consultation.

You can complete the questionnaire by going to the Board's website at www.mrtboard.org.nz and clicking on the link on the Home Page under the Consultation heading.

Consultation Questionnaire will close at 4.00 pm on

Friday 27th November 2015

Please make sure you have completed the questionnaire by that date