

What if something goes wrong?

The independent Health and Disability Commissioner promotes and protects the rights of consumers of health services and receives all complaints against health practitioners. If you have a complaint about a health practitioner you should contact the Commissioner's office on 0800 11 22 33 or www.hdc.org.nz.

The Act creates a separate Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal. The Tribunal considers serious disciplinary matters and can impose penalties ranging from fining the practitioner, ordering that the practitioner practise only under certain conditions (for example under supervision), to suspension or cancellation of registration.

You may also want to talk to the practitioner's registering authority about your concerns. Web addresses and phone numbers for each authority are listed on the back of this pamphlet.

The Health Regulatory Authorities of New Zealand (HRANZ) is an informal group made up of the 15 registering authorities listed overleaf. HRANZ oversees and manages matters of common interest.

This leaflet has been produced by HRANZ with the support of the Ministry of Health.



www.moh.govt.nz

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REGISTERING AUTHORITY CONTACT DETAILS

Chiropractic BoardPh 04 474 0703
www.chiropracticboard.org.nz

Dental CouncilPh 04 499 4820
www.dcnz.org.nz

Dietitians BoardPh 04 474 0746
www.dietitiansboard.org.nz

Medical Council of New ZealandPh 04 384 7635
www.mcnz.org.nz

Medical Laboratory Science BoardPh 04 474 0701
www.mlsboard.org.nz

Medical Radiation Technologists BoardPh 04 474 0745
www.mrtboard.org.nz

Midwifery CouncilPh 04 474 0740
www.midwiferycouncil.org.nz

Nursing Council of New ZealandPh 04 802 0247
www.nursingcouncil.org.nz

Occupational Therapy BoardPh 04 474 0708
www.otboard.org.nz Ph 04 474 0709

Osteopathic CouncilPh 04 474 0747
www.osteopathiccouncil.org.nz

**Optometrists and
Dispensing Opticians Board**Ph 04 474 0705
www.optometristsboard.org.nz
www.dispensingopticiansboard.org.nz

Pharmacy CouncilPh 04 495 0330
www.pharmacycouncil.org.nz

Physiotherapy BoardPh 04 471 2610
www.physioboard.org.nz

Podiatrists BoardPh 04 499 7979
www.podiatristsboard.org.nz

Psychologists BoardPh 04 474 0744
www.psychologistsboard.org.nz

THE HEALTH PRACTITIONERS COMPETENCE ASSURANCE ACT 2003

Confidence in your health practitioner



HEALTH REGULATORY
AUTHORITIES OF NEW ZEALAND

SEPTEMBER 2004

Confidence in your health practitioner

The main purpose of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 is to protect the health and safety of the public. It seeks to ensure that the treatment and healthcare you receive from a registered health practitioner is of a high standard.

This leaflet tells you how the Act benefits you.

The Act covers all registered health practitioners and replaces a number of separate, outdated laws. The Act looks after your health and safety in the following ways:

- It ensures health practitioners are properly trained and qualified before they can be registered
- It requires health practitioners to continually update and improve their skills
- It establishes independent registering authorities to register and monitor health practitioners
- It establishes an independent Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.

What does the Act cover?

The Act covers all registered health practitioners in New Zealand, including:

- chiropractors
- dentists, dental technicians, clinical dental technicians, dental therapists and dental hygienists
- dietitians
- dispensing opticians
- medical laboratory scientists and technicians
- medical practitioners (such as doctors, psychiatrists, surgeons and other specialists)
- medical radiation technologists
- midwives
- nurses
- occupational therapists
- optometrists
- osteopaths
- pharmacists
- physiotherapists
- podiatrists
- psychologists.

In the future, other health practitioners may also come under the Act.

How are you protected?

Under the Act, each practitioner is answerable to an independent registering authority (listed over).

Registering authorities ensure that health practitioners:

- are registered in a 'scope of practice' which describes the health services they can provide
- have the right qualifications for their scope of practice
- have a current practising certificate (license) which has to be renewed each year
- maintain and develop their skills and competence
- have good English language and communication skills
- are physically and mentally able to work.

Each registering authority maintains a register or list of health practitioners that is available to the public. In many cases you can find and look at a register on the Internet.

Monitoring health practitioners

Registering authorities set the standards that all health practitioners must meet. If a registering authority has concerns over the quality and standard of treatment a practitioner provides, it may take steps to protect the public. For example, it may require a practitioner to undertake some further training, practise under the supervision of another practitioner or limit the kind of services he or she can provide.