



Policy on doctors returning to medical practice after an absence from practice for three or more years

Policy Statement

The Registrar must promptly submit an application for an annual practising certificate to Council if the applicant has not lawfully practised medicine in the three years preceding the application, in accordance with section 27(1)(f) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA)

The APC will be issued subject to conditions, in order to protect the health and safety of the public and to ensure a safe and structured return to practice for the applicant.

Rationale

1. Section 3 of the HPCAA 2003 states that the principal purpose of the Act is to protect the health and safety of members of the public by providing for mechanisms to ensure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practise medicine. Issuing the APC subject to conditions will ensure a safe return to practice for the doctor.
2. Applications from doctors who have not held an APC in the three years preceding the application must be referred to the Registrar

Procedures

3. A doctor who enquires about returning to practice after an absence of three years or more will be sent an application for an APC and a Practice Intentions Form (see Appendix 1) to complete.
4. If working in clinical practice, the doctor must submit a detailed induction plan including time to be spent as an observer (up to one week, changed at the discretion of the Registrar).
5. Council staff will formulate conditions to be placed on the APC, specific to the doctor's practice intentions:

REQUIRED CONDITIONS

- That the medical practitioner <name> must work under the supervision of a medical practitioner registered within a vocational scope of practice <name>.
- That the medical practitioner <name> may work only as a <work role> (in the branch of <branch of medicine>) at <place of employment>.

OPTIONAL CONDITIONS FOR MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

- That these conditions may be removed by the Registrar on

receipt of satisfactory supervision reports at one, three, and six months (12 and 18 months if necessary).

- That the doctor <name> completes a Level 7 New Zealand

Resuscitation Council approved Advanced Cardiac Life Support course within 3 months of commencing practice.

6. The conditions placed on the APC will depend on what work the practitioner will be doing, how long the medical practitioner has been out of lawful medical practice, how many hours the medical practitioner will be working, and what CME the medical practitioner has been involved in since ceasing practice. The formula below will apply.
7. Doctors returning to hospital work must complete a Level 7 ACLS course.
8. The medical practitioner will be asked to agree in writing to the proposed conditions.
9. Once a doctor has agreed in writing to the proposed conditions, their application may be approved by the Registrar.
10. If a doctor does not agree to the conditions proposed by the Registrar, their application will be considered at the next full Council meeting.
11. Any application for an APC for a medical practitioner who has not practised medicine for 10 years or more must be considered by Council at the next full meeting.

Notes

Doctors who have not practised lawfully for three years due to fitness to practice reasons must provide information on this when they apply for an APC. These applications will be referred to the Health and/or Standards team in the first instance for advice about what additional conditions may be required. These applications will then be considered at a full Council meeting.

Formula for calculating conditions:

	TIME OUT OF PRACTICE	
	3-4 years	5-9 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same work as before; and• Full time; and• CME completed	Reports at 1, 3 and 6 months	Reports at 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different work; and/or• Part time; and/or• No CME completed	Reports at 1, 3 6, and 12 months	Reports at 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 18 months

Approved by Council: February 2004
Updated for HPCAA 2003: June 2004