



From the Chair and Chief Executive

Kia ora koutou

We are very aware the workload for pharmacists has not eased. Your continued commitment to ensure your patients receive the best possible care is appreciated and as the profession's regulator, we remain assured that pharmacists have maintained the high standards of practice that the public have, rightly, come to expect.

We have been reviewing and considering the recertification requirements for some time now. However, some pharmacists have questioned why we're doing this now. The development of the new framework has been underway for over two years and robustly tested with a range of pharmacists. We believe that the proposed framework provides a better mechanism for assuring Council of pharmacists' ongoing competence but, just as importantly, will be a better and less onerous exercise for pharmacists to record their CPD activities and its impact on their practice.

Council has considered arguments for and against introducing and transitioning to new requirements over the next year versus leaving it for another year or two. At this point we believe the net result over the period will be easier for you in the long run and provide better assurance to the public of your competence and fitness to practice sooner. In addition, we believe the new framework helps us, as a regulator, to ensure we do our part to enable the profession to be progressive and adapt to the challenges post-COVID and in any changes resulting from the Health and Disability System Review. There is more on recertification later in this newsletter, including information about a questionnaire coming your way soon to gain your feedback on some specific questions that have arisen during our discussion with pharmacists.

Council had its first meeting in person (not over ZOOM) since the lockdown in late June. It was a very productive meeting. Some of the items discussed are the subject of specific articles in this newsletter, such as:

- prescriber competence standards
- Council statements on quality improvements and expectations of

pharmacists in roles of responsibilities recertification next steps

- submission to the Ministry of Health on the proposed performance review standards and terms of reference for responsible authorities (a copy of our joint submission with three other responsible authorities can be found on our website [here](#))
- and other items such as Council's operating and capital budgets for 2020/21.

Council was delighted to be able to turn part of its meeting over to a discussion with Dr Ashley Bloomfield (Director-General Ministry of Health), Andi Shirtcliffe (Chief Pharmacist Advisor, Ministry) and Chris James (Group Manager, Medsafe, Ministry). We discussed a lot in a very short space of time, key items included:

- Identifying early lessons from the pandemic to ensure that we as a Responsible Authority can be more effective and efficient.
- What the Ministry's expectations of Responsible Authorities might be in respect to the changes proposed under the Health & Disability System Review.
- How Responsible Authorities, here first and foremost for the benefit of the New Zealand public, can best support the evolution of the future vision articulated by the profession in response to changes and potential opportunities in the health system for a wider contribution from pharmacists and the pharmacy profession.
- The relationship between Council, as regulator of pharmacists, and the role the Ministry has in regulating medicines and pharmacies, through Medicines Control and MedSafe, in a way that helps minimise regulatory compliance but ensures the greatest effectiveness in assuring safe delivery of pharmacy services.

We trust this newsletter keeps you informed of the significant issues and matters before the Council.

Ngā mihi nui

Ensuring public wellbeing through safe pharmacist practice

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Jeff Harrison
Chair



Michael Pead
Chief Executive

New Recertification Requirements

In June Council outlined its new recertification framework for pharmacists to begin using from 1 April 2021. Council released these as part of a process of seeking wider feedback from pharmacists. There are other steps to be completed before April.

Questionnaire coming soon – please tell us what you think!

A link to a questionnaire will be emailed to all practising pharmacists before the end of July. Please watch out for it and check your junk mail if you haven't received it by 31 July. We strongly encourage you to respond to this questionnaire so that we have a reliable indication of the profession's view and as much information as possible to help us make the framework effective and workable.

Your responses to the questionnaire will be most valuable to us if you have familiarised yourself with the framework and other background material (some we have recently added) that is on our website (*see sidebar on right*). Your responses will also help us inform you on the next steps over the course of the next eight months. Please take a look.

It is important to note that we are at the beginning of a series of steps that will help us further test the framework, refine the process and plan the proposed roll-out. We can't yet provide all the answers because we haven't yet finalised all the details of: guidance to pharmacists for meeting the requirements, technology to support the framework, pricing and transition. Your responses to the questionnaire will be important in directing our decisions on how we can help you to meet the requirements, and will tell us of issues we still need to address.

By introducing the requirements before all the detail was finalised we are taking the opportunity to understand any concerns; and address these before all the elements of the new recertification process are finalised. Our goal is to achieve a seamless transition to the new requirements for pharmacists.

Material Available Explaining the Requirements

Each of the questions below provide links to a document (or series of documents) on our website that should provide you the answers or understanding of the work so far:

1. What is the recertification framework?
 - [Introductory webinar](#)
 - [Explanation of Framework](#)
 - [Questions and answers](#)
2. Why the need for new recertification requirements?
 - [What was considered – and why the change](#)
3. What are the steps Council has taken so far and have yet to be taken?
 - [Recertification timeline](#)
4. What is the verifier role all about?
 - [Verifier role description](#)
5. Some Possible Misunderstandings?
 - [Possible Misunderstandings Dispelled](#)

Some Possible Misunderstandings Dispelled

We have seen material published in various forums that have created misunderstanding about recertification requirements and how they will be supported. We would like to ensure that pharmacists' responses to our questionnaire are not affected by such misunderstandings. Please be aware of the following clarifications in bold text.

1. **The recertification framework is different to ENHANCE** - Recertification requirements are set by Council. ENHANCE is a programme provided by PSNZ (under a contract with PCNZ until March 2021) and comprises an online platform for recording activities and a support service.
2. **Framework development was a robust process** – Council commenced work in 2018. It has reviewed international material and considered the approach of other health profession regulators in New Zealand.
3. **Practising pharmacists ensured the framework will work for all** – A representative working group was commissioned by Council to develop and test the framework. Our current promotion of the framework, webinars and questionnaire allow us to test with a wider audience to assure us that we haven't missed any unforeseen challenges.
4. **Verifiers are not accountable to Council for another pharmacist's competence** – Council will not hold a verifier responsible for another pharmacist's competence.

More detail is on our website [here](#)

Project Updates

Pharmacist Prescriber Competence Standards review

The current pharmacist prescriber competence standards were published in 2010, and are currently undergoing review. We have already engaged with pharmacist prescribers and received feedback on the current prescriber standards and have made a decision to align with the UK joint prescribing standards with the goal of moving towards joint prescribing competencies for all NZ prescribers in the future. Over the next couple of months we will be drafting the guidance that provides NZ context to the prescribing competencies, with the assistance of NZ pharmacist prescribers and input from collaborative health practitioners. We expect to seek feedback from the wider sector in late August 2020.

Council statements of expectations for pharmacists in roles of responsibility and quality improvement

Following 18 months of research and analysis of data sourced from practising NZ pharmacists, HDC cases, and our complaints database, we have drafted two Council statements with the assistance of a pharmacist working group and external expertise. These will be gradually introduced to the sector over the next three months. We acknowledge that pharmacists are still coping with exceptional workloads as the result of COVID 19, and assure the sector that the statements provide more explicit context and highlight expectations that already exist in the Competence Standards for the Pharmacy Profession 2015 and the Code of Ethics 2018. They do not introduce new expectations or demands on pharmacists. We intend that these will be extremely useful statements for pharmacists who are in positions of effective control, pharmacy managers or employers to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for systems and quality improvement. Further information will be provided with the assistance of a pharmacist working group as we disseminate the information to the sector in the most efficient and time-effective way using practice and case examples.

New Registrations

We welcome the following pharmacists from Australia, Ireland, the UK, Canada or the USA onto our register.

Gwendolyn Zmijewski
Zarina Ginai
Sean Craig

Supervising a pharmacist returning to practice in NZ

From time to time we are asked about the supervision of pharmacists returning to practice. To provide context, after 3 years away from practice, pharmacists previously registered and practising in NZ must complete a period of 3 months supervised practice (which appears on the public register as a condition in their scope of practice for the purposes of registration), working with a nominated pharmacist who provides support and assistance whilst the pharmacist “reacclimatises” to practising pharmacy in NZ. This is also an employment relationship with the pharmacist in paid employment during the period of supervised practice. Often there have been significant changes in technology, brand changes, LTC updates, legal changes, new medicines available or therapeutic guidelines to name a few examples. It can be very overwhelming returning to a busy dispensary with lots of new processes and information to cope with and can take a few days to settle in. To mitigate the risks associated with being a little “rusty” in practice and coming back into a stressful environment, a pharmacist supervisor is assigned to help the pharmacist get back up to speed, and provide an additional “buffer” to protect patient safety until the pharmacist is confident enough to practice on their own, and they have completed the Council requirements for returning to practice.

The condition of supervision is most frequently used by Council to support pharmacists returning to the NZ practising register or as part of the registration process for an overseas qualified pharmacist seeking to practice in NZ. The length of the supervision period depends upon the number of years away from practice or the country where the pharmacist has registered/practised.

What does supervision involve?

The **condition of supervision** involves the monitoring of, and reporting on, the performance of the pharmacist under supervision. An initial period of direct supervision is recommended, after which the level of supervision should be determined by the supervising pharmacist and the pharmacist being supervised. Each situation, work environment and pharmacist will be

unique and therefore the level of supervision needs to be individualised. The level of supervision can be further reviewed and modified on an as-required basis. As a general rule the pharmacist completing the return to practice process may require [his/her] own indemnity insurance when [he/she] is no longer working under direct supervision. We recommend that each individual situation is discussed with PDA.

What are the responsibilities of a supervisor?

As the pharmacist supervising a pharmacist colleague returning to practice, it is your responsibility to confirm that [he/she] is familiar with, understands and can apply the legal, ethical and subsidy requirements and other practical aspects of pharmacy practice in New Zealand. This knowledge is reflective of that expected to be used on a daily basis in a New Zealand pharmacy. When you agree to supervise a return to practice pharmacist you will receive correspondence informing you of the process, reporting requirements and what upskilling the pharmacist needs to do.

In addition to providing Council with monthly feedback on the pharmacist’s progress the supervisor is responsible for raising any concerns about the pharmacist’s professionalism, ethical practice or fitness to practice. The supervisor also helps the pharmacist prepare for the Law and Ethics interview at the end of their period of supervised practice, which is another set of external eyes on the knowledge of NZ practice and legislation necessary to practice unsupervised.

The supervisor provides assurance to Council, by the way of a statement that the pharmacist being supervised has successfully completed the required number of hours of supervised practice and is ready to practice unsupervised.

There are other instances where supervision may be stipulated as a condition in a pharmacist’s scope of practice and in these instances Council team members will contact the nominated supervisor to discuss requirements, followed by written confirmation of the supervisor’s responsibilities.

Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal Decision

In April 2020 charges laid against Mr James Scott Bowman before the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (HPDT) were found. These charges related to his convictions in the District Court under the Crimes Act of Common Assault and Threatening Act, offences which reflected adversely on his fitness to practise as a Pharmacist. A precis with a link to the full HPDT findings may be found [here](#).

Mr Bowman's convictions were not directly related to pharmacy practice but highlights the expectation of 24/7 professionalism for pharmacists and all health professionals. To read more on lessons learnt from HPDT cases, including this expectation for pharmacists, please revisit an article from December 2018 [here](#).

Why have I not received emails from the Pharmacy Council?

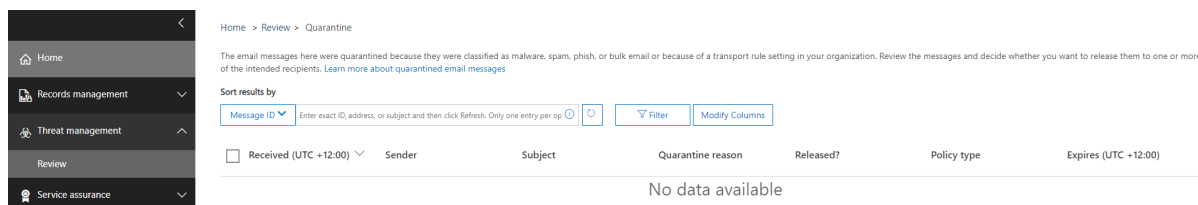
Council utilises email and the website as its primary method for communicating broad messages to the sector. Because of this, we do want to ensure that pharmacists and interns are receiving these communications reliably. If you have not been receiving emails from Council or know of a colleague who has not, some possible issues are outlined below.

Check your junk email folder

You can prevent emails that you wish to access going to your junk folder by setting safe senders and safe domains.

Check your quarantined emails

Your email provider may quarantine messages before they even reach your inbox. For example, if you have a Microsoft 365 email address instructions on how to access quarantined emails can be found [here](#).



Check the email address that you have registered with the Pharmacy Council

Log in to your Pharmacy Council account and check that the email address on file for you is correct. If necessary, update your details from within your account

Practising Status:
Registered, current

Scope of Practice Status:
Pharmacist

APC Expires:
31/03/21

You have previously unsubscribed from Pharmacy Council newsletters

You will not receive Council newsletters if you have previously unsubscribed from these emails; however, important updates that are relevant to you will still be sent. If you wish to resubscribe to newsletters please contact us at enquiries@pharmacycouncil.org.nz.

Email:
apharmacist@1pharmacy.co.nz

Daytime Phone:
44 555 6666

Mobile Phone:
222 333 4444

Use an alternative email provider

Because certain email providers may have more aggressive filtering policies than others, you could consider registering an alternative email address hosted by another provider.