

Policy

Recertification policy

Purpose of recertification requirements

The Pharmacy Council enacts the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) as it relates to pharmacists. The main purpose of the Act is to provide mechanisms that ensure pharmacists are competent and fit to practise.

The Pharmacy Council, as regulator, has a unique responsibility to the New Zealand public to ensure safe practice of the pharmacy profession. Competence Standards for the Pharmacy Profession and the Code of Ethics state the professional obligations on pharmacists. Both require commitment to continual professional development to maintain personal competence and enhance pharmacy practice.

Setting requirements for annual recertification is one mechanism provided by s41 of the Act to ensure pharmacists' continued competence. Pharmacists are asked to confirm they have practised for at least 450 hours in the three years immediately preceding their application for a practising certificate. They must also meet professional development requirements.

This policy addresses professional development activities that are required by the Pharmacy Council for annual recertification.

Setting of annual recertification requirements

From time to time the Council may review and update recertification requirements.

In setting requirements, Council applies principles of best practice, right touch regulation¹ to balance achievability and effectiveness. Assurance requirements including evaluation, verification and audit components of assurance are also included.

Beginning in April 2021, the Council set a small number of professional development activities, selected to have a positive impact on a pharmacist's personal professional competence for their role. In addition to prioritising its responsibility for public safety, the Council sought to keep the burden of compliance and recording low for pharmacists.

Recertification requirements

It is the responsibility of a practising pharmacist to be familiar with the requirements and to provide evidence of compliance by the relevant dates each year.

Recertification requirements are published on the Pharmacy Council website. Individual activities are listed, together with guidance and examples.

Additional information relating to any requirement may be advised from time to time on the website and in Council emails.

¹ Proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent, targeted, agile.

<https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/publications/detail/right-touch-regulation-in-practice-international-perspectives>

What must pharmacists do?

The [Council website](#) states the number of each type of activity that must be completed for the current year and any other relevant details.

Pharmacists are expected to read material on the relevant pages of the website as well as emails and electronic newsletters from the Council which may contain important information about recertification.

Recertification as a regulatory mechanism is necessary to sustain public trust in the profession. Council has set requirements that reflect its view that pharmacists are responsible professionals who will select appropriate professional development to support their ability to practise competently in their role, taking into account the risks posed to the actions to maximise health outcomes and minimise associated risks of their practice.

The Council acknowledges that pharmacists will naturally undertake a range of professional development activities beyond the small number required for recertification; however only a small number of the specified types need to be recorded for the Council's recertification purposes. The Council does not require a full record of a pharmacist's professional development.

Each practising pharmacist must undertake the required activities in accordance with the guidance provided and record evidence of their compliance on the Council online programme called "MyRecert".

Audit

Each year, the Pharmacy Council will conduct an audit of the completed MyRecert records of a group of pharmacists. The primary goal of the audit is to confirm compliance with recertification requirements.

The 2021 recertification requirements have been conceived as a high-trust framework with an expectation that pharmacists will act in good faith to comply, in line with the guidance provided. Breach of this trust will be considered a serious matter and consequences applied accordingly.

Failure to comply with recertification requirements may result in the Pharmacy Council seeking more information and/or requiring a pharmacist to undertake additional actions. Where non-compliance is significant and/or involves a false statement to Council, the Council may (s43,1) (a) change, or place a condition on, a pharmacist's scope or in cases of (s43,1) (b) suspend registration.