

GAZETTE NOTICE

Secondary Legislation

Pharmacy Council of New Zealand Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2026

Notice

Pursuant to section 14 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ("Act"), the Pharmacy Council ("Council") gives this Notice of Amendment in relation to the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Notice.

Title, commencement, and revocation

1. This notice may be cited as the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2026.
2. This notice comes into effect on 10 September 2026.
3. This notice revokes and replaces all previous Pharmacy Council of New Zealand Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications notices [New Zealand Gazette, 16 October 2014, No. 127, page 3568](#)), [New Zealand Gazette, 13 November 2018, Notice No. 2018-gs5696](#) and [New Zealand Gazette, 20 January 2026, Notice No. 2026-sl209](#)).

Between March and April 2026, the Council consulted on proposed amendments to registration pathways for the Pharmacy Council Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Notice. Following consideration of the feedback received, Council approved changes to:

- Update the names of overseas registration pathways.
- Update the prescribed qualifications and registration requirements in the Comparable Pathway.
- Remove references to the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (while retaining the registration pathway); and
- Include prescribed qualifications for Pharmacist Prescribers from the United Kingdom seeking registration in the Pharmacist Prescriber Scope or Practice.

These amendments, together with editorial changes made to improve clarity, consistency, and readability, are incorporated into this Notice of Amendment.

This notice has the status of secondary legislation for the purposes of the Legislation Act 2019. This notice is published on the Council's website:

<https://pharmacycouncil.org.nz/public/gazette-notices/>

A Consistency Accountability Statement has also been completed and published on the Council's website in accordance with the Regulatory Standards Act 2025.

Explanatory note

Pursuant to section 11 of the Act, the Council is required to specify scopes of practice. Pursuant to section 12 of the Act, the Council must also prescribe the qualifications and other requirements that must be met to be eligible for registration in each scope.

Council has established three scopes of practice:

1. Intern Pharmacist
2. Pharmacist
3. Pharmacist Prescriber.

New Zealand and Australian pharmacy graduates who wish to register as pharmacists in New Zealand must first register in the Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice and then work towards registration in the Pharmacist scope. Overseas-qualified pharmacists may be eligible to register through either the Comparable Pathway or the Non-Comparable Pathway, depending on where they gained their pharmacy qualifications and/or their existing registration and experience. Pharmacists with registration and experience from a comparable jurisdiction may be eligible for direct registration in the Pharmacist scope, while those with qualifications, registration and experience from non-comparable jurisdictions may be eligible to register in the Intern Pharmacist scope initially before registration in the Pharmacist scope.

The Intern Pharmacist and Pharmacist Scopes cannot be held at the same time; however, the Pharmacist and Pharmacist Prescriber Scopes can be held concurrently.

Each scope has a defined set of functions and responsibilities, together with the prescribed qualifications for registration in that scope. These are set out below.

Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice

The Intern Pharmacist, practising under the supervision of a practising registered pharmacist acts as a medicines manager, providing patient-centred medication therapy management, health improvement, and disease prevention services in a collaborative environment. Intern Pharmacists ensure safe and quality use of medicines and optimise health outcomes by contributing to patient assessment and to the selection, prescribing, monitoring and evaluation of medicine therapy.

The practice of pharmacy may include:

- the custody, preparation and dispensing of medicines and pharmaceutical products;
- the selection and provision of non-prescription medicine therapies and therapeutic aids;
- health promotion, including health screening;
- the potential for administration of medicines; and
- researching and evaluating information and providing evidence-based advice and recommendations on medicines and medicine-related health issues.

1. Prescribed Qualifications for Registration in the Intern Pharmacist Scope

Pursuant to section 12 of the Act, the following qualifications are prescribed for registration in the Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice:

- a. **New Zealand and Australian Pharmacy Graduates**
 - i. Bachelor of Pharmacy, University of Auckland; or
 - ii. Bachelor of Pharmacy (Honours), University of Auckland; or
 - iii. Bachelor of Pharmacy, University of Otago; or
 - iv. Bachelor of Pharmacy with Honours, University of Otago; or
 - v. Master of Pharmacy Practice, University of Waikato; or
 - vi. Australian pharmacy degrees from Schools of Pharmacy holding either full or conditional accreditation from the Australian Pharmacy Council.
- b. **Non-Comparable Pathway Pharmacists** - overseas registered pharmacists who are currently registered in countries other than Australia or Comparable Pathway countries and who have:
 - i. A pharmacy degree(s) deemed by Council as having sufficient content and learning outcomes to support safe and effective practice in New Zealand;
 - ii. Current registration as a pharmacist with a pharmacy registration authority in the same country they gained their original degree;

- iii. Post-registration work experience as a pharmacist deemed by Council as sufficient to support safe and effective practice in New Zealand;
- iv. Passed the Overseas Pharmacist Readiness Assessment (OPRA ®) delivered by Australian Pharmacy Council or other examination deemed equivalent by Council; and
- v. Passed the New Zealand Pharmacy Legislation course delivered by the School of Pharmacy, University of Auckland.

Pharmacist Scope of Practice

The practice of pharmacy is necessarily broad and is wider than pharmacists working directly with patients, given that such roles influence clinical practice and public safety. In a clinical role, the pharmacist acts as a medicines manager, providing patient-centred medication therapy management, health improvement, and disease prevention services, usually in a collaborative environment. Pharmacists ensure safe and quality use of medicines and optimise health outcomes by contributing to patient assessment and to the selection, prescribing, monitoring and evaluation of medicine therapy.

The practice of pharmacy may include, but is not limited to:

- the custody, preparation and dispensing of medicines and pharmaceutical products;
- the selection and provision of non-prescription medicine therapies and therapeutic aids;
- health promotion, including health screening;
- administration of medicines, including injectable medicines;
- researching and evaluating information and providing evidence-based advice and recommendations on medicines and medicine-related health issues;
- teaching and advising;
- policy development;
- management;
- manufacturing; and
- auditing.

2. Prescribed Qualifications for Registration in the Pharmacist Scope of Practice

Pursuant to section 12 of the Act, the following qualifications are prescribed for registration in the Pharmacist Scope of Practice:

- a. **New Zealand and Australian Pharmacy Graduates** registered in the Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice; and who have
 - i. Met the requirements of the Intern Training Programme delivered by the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand; and
 - ii. Passed the Pharmacy Council Assessment Centre or other examination deemed equivalent by Council.
- b. **Non-Comparable Pathway Pharmacists** who are registered in the Intern Pharmacist Scope of Practice; and who have
 - i. Met the requirements of the Intern Training Programme delivered by the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand; and
 - ii. Passed the Pharmacy Council Assessment Centre or other examination deemed equivalent by Council.
- c. **Comparable Pathway Pharmacists**, who:
 - i. Hold current or previous registration with a pharmacy registration authority recognised as comparable by Council and;

- ii. Have post-registration work experience as a pharmacist in a comparable authority jurisdiction deemed by Council as sufficient to support safe and effective practice in New Zealand.

Authorities recognised as comparable are those in which:

- there is a legislative basis for registration / licensure of pharmacists,
- the practice of pharmacy is considered by Council to be substantially equivalent to New Zealand,
- the pharmacist competencies are considered by Council to be substantially equivalent to New Zealand, and
- accreditation of tertiary institutions offering pharmacy degrees is to a standard deemed equivalent to New Zealand accreditation standards for pharmacy education providers.

Pharmacist Prescriber Scope of Practice

Pharmacist Prescribers have specialised clinical, pharmacological, and pharmaceutical knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to their area of prescribing practice. This allows them to provide individualised medicines management services, including the prescribing of medicines to patients across a range of healthcare settings and models. Pharmacist Prescribers work in a collaborative health team environment with other healthcare professionals and are not the primary diagnostician. They can write a prescription for a patient in their care to initiate or modify therapy (including discontinuation or maintenance of therapy originally initiated by another prescriber).

They can also provide a wide range of assessment and treatment interventions which includes but is not limited to:

- ordering and interpreting investigation (including laboratory and related tests);
- assessing and monitoring a patient's response to therapy;
- providing education and advice to a patient on their medicine therapy.

The Pharmacist Prescriber must prescribe within the limits of their professional expertise and competence (both clinical and cultural) and ethical codes of practice. They are responsible and accountable for the care they provide.

3. Prescribed Qualifications for Registration in the Pharmacist Prescriber Scope of Practice

Pursuant to section 12 of the Act, the following qualifications are prescribed for registration in the Pharmacist Prescriber Scope of Practice:

- a. **New Zealand graduates**
 - i. Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Pharmacy in Prescribing, University of Auckland; or
 - ii. Postgraduate Certificate in Pharmacist Prescribing, University of Otago.
- b. **United Kingdom Pharmacists with independent prescribing annotation who:**
 - i. Hold a practising certificate in the Pharmacist Scope of Practice in New Zealand;
 - ii. Hold a prescribing qualification from the United Kingdom deemed by Council as having sufficient content and learning outcomes to be equivalent to the New Zealand Pharmacist Prescriber qualifications; and
 - iii. Have post-registration work experience as a prescriber deemed by Council as sufficient to support safe and effective practice as a Pharmacist Prescriber in New Zealand.

Dated at Wellington the 6th day of August 2026.

NYENYEZI SIAMEJA, Registrar, Pharmacy Council of New Zealand.