New Zealand
Medical Radiation
Technologists Board
Te Poari Ringa Hangarua Iraruke

Feedback on draft revised professional capabilities for medical radiation practice issued by the Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia

Stakeholder details

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Introduction

1. Medical Radiation Technologist Board (the MRTB) is one of sixteen New Zealand health regulatory authorities appointed by the New Zealand Minister of Health under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act).

2. The MRTB is responsible for the administration of the Act in respect of the profession of medical radiation technology (encompassing the practices of medical imaging and radiation therapy).

3. The primary responsibility of the MRTB is to protect the health and safety of the New Zealand public by ensuring practitioners registered in the professions of medical imaging and radiation therapy are competent and fit to practise.

4. The following scopes of practice fall under the jurisdiction of the MRTB:
    - Medical Imaging Technologist
    - Radiation Therapist
    - Nuclear Medicine Technologist
    - Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologist
    - Sonographer

5. The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act (TTMRA) provides for the mutual recognition of regulatory standards adopted in Australia and New Zealand. TTMRA applies to the following scopes of practices:
    - Medical Imaging Technologist,
    - Nuclear Medicine Technologist

- Radiation Therapist

6. Currently, all AHPRA registered medical imaging and radiation therapy practitioners may apply for registration in New Zealand under the TTMRA pathway and applicants are treated the same as a New Zealand graduate. However, Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists and Sonographers are not covered by TTMRA.

Professional capabilities/Competence Standards

7. The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia (the MRPBA) professional capabilities describe the minimum level of professional capability required for general registration and independent practice as a diagnostic radiographer, a nuclear medicine technologist or a radiation therapist in Australia. The professional capabilities as defined by the MRPBA are similar to the Competence Standards adopted by the MRTB.

8. The alignment between the MRPBA's professional capabilities and the MRTB's competence standards enables the principles of TTMRA to apply to the following registered professions:

New Zealand Professional Titles	**Australian Professional Titles**
Medical Imaging Technologist (MIT)	Diagnostic radiographer (DR)
Nuclear Medicine Technologist (NM)	Nuclear medicine technologist NM)
Radiation Therapist (RT)	Radiation therapist (RT)

Capabilities relating to ultrasound and MRI

9. In New Zealand, both ultrasound and medical resonance imaging (MRI) are separate registerable scopes of practice. The MRPBA has developed capabilities for MRI and ultrasound based on these scopes of practice and included them as optional key capabilities and enabling components within Domain 1 (Medical radiation practitioner). The MRTB acknowledges the collaborative work between MRTB and MRPBA to better clarify capabilities for MRI and ultrasound is a positive move.

10. The MRTB wish to point out that a registered medical radiation practitioner (DR, NM, RT) who includes ultrasound or MRI in their practice within Australia will not be able to practice ultrasound or MRI in New Zealand unless they obtain registration in these scope of practice in addition to their registration in MIT, NM or RT.

Medical radiation practice professional capabilities and practice in computed tomography

11. Within Domain 1A: Diagnostic radiographer the MRPBA has included the performance of diagnostic computed tomography (CT) imaging (Domain 1A:2) which appears to be a separate scope of practice. However, in New Zealand CT is not an entry-level competence for Medical Imaging Technology.

12. Therefore it appears, a registered MIT from New Zealand seeking registration in Australia could not perform CT unless they have completed post-qualification training in this

capability. Conversely, a DR registered in Australia who solely carries out CT would not necessarily qualify for registration as an MIT in New Zealand. For the modality of CT- at entry level competency the MRTB only requires the practitioner to be able to demonstrate an understanding of the use, design and operation of CT systems, including setting appropriate parameters and protocols. This is the appropriate competency level for a New Zealand trained MIT at the undergraduate level.

Domain 1: Medical radiation practitioner

13. Domain 1 as defined by the MRPBA covers the knowledge, skills and attributes a medical radiation practitioner requires to practise independently and provide safe, high quality, patient/client-centered care. Key capabilities in this domain are common to medical radiation practitioners registered in any of the three divisions. Domain 1 is comparable to Domain 5 within the Competence Standards of the MRTB. Because not all practitioners registered with the MRTB use ionizing radiation the MRTB is considering removing this common domain and incorporating the relevant key competencies detail in Domain 5 into the domains for each of the scopes of practice.

Preliminary consultation questions

1. Does any content need to be amended or removed from any of the documents?
Domain1C: Radiation therapy capabilities We are not sure to why "5. Perform computed tomography (CT) imaging" is a separate capability. It appears to double up with "2.Perform simulation and pre-treatment imaging" – They are both perform statements that appear to double up, and 5 could comfortably sit under 2. *Domain 1: Optional key capabilities and enabling components* 10b is unclear. We suggest the wording be amended to read: "Apply knowledge of the principles of ultrasound physics to minimize the likelihood of biological effects and identification of unnecessary artefacts."