

Review of Scopes of Practice 2008 – Consultation Paper

The passing of the HPCA Act (2003) required regulatory authorities to describe the contents of the profession in terms of one or more scopes of practice. The Act states scopes may be described by reference to titles that are commonly understood by persons working in the health sector, by reference to an area of science or learning, and by reference to tasks commonly performed or illnesses or conditions to be diagnosed, treated, or managed. Regulatory authorities are also required to publish the necessary qualification or qualifications for any prescribed scope.

Health practitioners will have observed that regulatory authorities subsequently took a range of approaches regarding scopes. Some prescribed a single scope of practice, while others took the step of prescribing general scopes in addition to a range of vocational scopes. After considerable deliberation, in September 2004 the New Zealand Psychologists Board specified five scopes of practice: three general scopes of "Psychologist", "Intern Psychologist" and "Trainee Psychologist"; and two vocational scopes of "Clinical Psychologist" and "Educational Psychologist".

In the intervening three years, the Board has received a relatively steady flow of informal and formal feedback about scopes. This feedback has included diverse opinions about how well current scopes add greater protection to the public.

Coinciding with the Ministry of Health's current review of the HPCA Act, the Psychologists Board has decided to review scopes of practice. This review includes distribution of a consultation paper and an invitation for stakeholders to make formal submissions.

I invite you to read the consultation paper and make a submission.

Submissions will be received by the Board up to Friday 23 May 2008.

Lois Surgenor
Chairperson
New Zealand Psychologists Board

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