

## What if something goes wrong?

The independent Health and Disability Commissioner promotes and protects the rights of consumers of health services and receives all complaints against health practitioners. If you have a complaint about a health practitioner you should contact the Commissioner's office on 0800 11 22 33 or [www.hdc.org.nz](http://www.hdc.org.nz).

The Act creates a separate Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal. The Tribunal considers serious disciplinary matters and can impose penalties ranging from fining the practitioner, ordering that the practitioner practise only under certain conditions (for example under supervision), to suspension or cancellation of registration.

You may also want to talk to the practitioner's registering authority about your concerns. Web addresses and phone numbers for each authority are listed on the back of this pamphlet.

The Health Regulatory Authorities of New Zealand (HRANZ) is an informal group made up of the 15 registering authorities listed overleaf. HRANZ oversees and manages matters of common interest.

This leaflet has been produced by HRANZ with the support of the Ministry of Health.



[www.moh.govt.nz](http://www.moh.govt.nz)

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### REGISTERING AUTHORITY CONTACT DETAILS

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Chiropractic Board</b> .....  | Ph 04 474 0703 |
| <a href="http://www.chiropracticboard.org.nz">www.chiropracticboard.org.nz</a>               |                |
| <b>Dental Council</b> .....  | Ph 04 499 4820 |
| <a href="http://www.dcnz.org.nz">www.dcnz.org.nz</a>   |                |
| <b>Dietitians Board</b> .....  | Ph 04 474 0746 |
| <a href="http://www.dietitiansboard.org.nz">www.dietitiansboard.org.nz</a>                   |                |
| <b>Medical Council of New Zealand</b> .....  | Ph 04 384 7635 |
| <a href="http://www.mcnz.org.nz">www.mcnz.org.nz</a>   |                |
| <b>Medical Laboratory Science Board</b> .....  | Ph 04 474 0701 |
| <a href="http://www.mlsboard.org.nz">www.mlsboard.org.nz</a>                                 |                |
| <b>Medical Radiation Technologists Board</b> .....   | Ph 04 474 0745 |
| <a href="http://www.mrtboard.org.nz">www.mrtboard.org.nz</a>                                 |                |
| <b>Midwifery Council</b> .....   | Ph 04 474 0740 |
| <a href="http://www.midwiferycouncil.org.nz">www.midwiferycouncil.org.nz</a>                 |                |
| <b>Nursing Council of New Zealand</b> .....  | Ph 04 802 0247 |
| <a href="http://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz">www.nursingcouncil.org.nz</a>                     |                |
| <b>Occupational Therapy Board</b> .....  | Ph 04 474 0708 |
| <a href="http://www.otboard.org.nz">www.otboard.org.nz</a>                                   |                |
| <b>Osteopathic Council</b> .....   | Ph 04 474 0747 |
| <a href="http://www.osteopathiccouncil.org.nz">www.osteopathiccouncil.org.nz</a>             |                |
| <b>Optometrists and<br/>Dispensing Opticians Board</b> .....                                 | Ph 04 474 0705 |
| <a href="http://www.optometristsboard.org.nz">www.optometristsboard.org.nz</a>               |                |
| <a href="http://www.dispensingopticiansboard.org.nz">www.dispensingopticiansboard.org.nz</a> |                |
| <b>Pharmacy Council</b> .....  | Ph 04 495 0330 |
| <a href="http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.nz">www.pharmacycouncil.org.nz</a>                   |                |
| <b>Physiotherapy Board</b> .....   | Ph 04 471 2610 |
| <a href="http://www.physioboard.org.nz">www.physioboard.org.nz</a>                           |                |
| <b>Podiatrists Board</b> .....   | Ph 04 499 7979 |
| <a href="http://www.podiatristsboard.org.nz">www.podiatristsboard.org.nz</a>                 |                |
| <b>Psychologists Board</b> .....   | Ph 04 474 0744 |
| <a href="http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz">www.psychologistsboard.org.nz</a>             |                |

SEPTEMBER 2004

THE HEALTH PRACTITIONERS  
COMPETENCE ASSURANCE ACT 2003

# Confidence in your health practitioner



HEALTH REGULATORY  
AUTHORITIES OF NEW ZEALAND

## Confidence in your health practitioner

The main purpose of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 is to protect the health and safety of the public. It seeks to ensure that the treatment and healthcare you receive from a registered health practitioner is of a high standard.

This leaflet tells you how the Act benefits you.

The Act covers all registered health practitioners and replaces a number of separate, outdated laws. The Act looks after your health and safety in the following ways:

- It ensures health practitioners are properly trained and qualified before they can be registered
- It requires health practitioners to continually update and improve their skills
- It establishes independent registering authorities to register and monitor health practitioners
- It establishes an independent Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.

## What does the Act cover?

The Act covers all registered health practitioners in New Zealand, including:

- chiropractors
- dentists, dental technicians, clinical dental technicians, dental therapists and dental hygienists
- dietitians
- dispensing opticians
- medical laboratory scientists and technicians
- medical practitioners (such as doctors, psychiatrists, surgeons and other specialists)
- medical radiation technologists
- midwives
- nurses
- occupational therapists
- optometrists
- osteopaths
- pharmacists
- physiotherapists
- podiatrists
- psychologists.

In the future, other health practitioners may also come under the Act.

## How are you protected?

Under the Act, each practitioner is answerable to an independent registering authority (listed over).

Registering authorities ensure that health practitioners:

- are registered in a 'scope of practice' which describes the health services they can provide
- have the right qualifications for their scope of practice
- have a current practising certificate (license) which has to be renewed each year
- maintain and develop their skills and competence
- have good English language and communication skills
- are physically and mentally able to work.

Each registering authority maintains a register or list of health practitioners that is available to the public. In many cases you can find and look at a register on the Internet.

## Monitoring health practitioners

Registering authorities set the standards that all health practitioners must meet. If a registering authority has concerns over the quality and standard of treatment a practitioner provides, it may take steps to protect the public. For example, it may require a practitioner to undertake some further training, practise under the supervision of another practitioner or limit the kind of services he or she can provide.