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| **Decision guidelines relating to practitioners who have not registered as a psychotherapist within 3 years of obtaining their qualification or obtaining an association membership status eligible for registration.** | |
| The following decision guidelines have been developed to assist the Board and its Committees in making fair, reasonable and lawful decisions which are consistent and equitable.  In order to work legally as a psychotherapist it is necessary to:   * be registered with the Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (the Board); and * hold a current Annual Practising Certificate.   **To that end, the objectives of this policy are:**   * to identify factors that may increase the risk of loss of competence and factors that may mitigate this risk; * to support practitioners to update their skills and knowledge; * to assure the public of professional competence while avoiding unnecessary barriers. | |
| **Preamble** | Under Section 15 of the HPCAA the Board may register applicants within a scope of practice if they:   * have the qualifications that are prescribed, under section 12, for that scope of practice; and * are fit for registration in accordance with section 14; and * are competent to practise within that scope of practice.   This policy focuses on competence to practise.  **This document contains information for practitioners who are seeking registration and an annual practising certification who either:**   1. Graduated with an approved grandparented qualification more than 3 years ago (Tertiary Pathway); or 2. Obtained eligibility for registration with membership of ANZSJA, NZAP or NZACAP more than 3 years ago (Professional Development Pathway).   Applicants applying for registration more than 3 years after completing the tertiary or professional development pathway requirements are required to demonstrate their competence to practise. |
| **General operational principles** | A psychotherapist is expected to demonstrate responsibility for ensuring their own competence by undertaking to:   1. Engage with a psychotherapist who is an experienced supervisor, to supervise their commencement or return to clinical practice. This person must be a fully qualified practitioner registered in either the Psychotherapist Scope of Practice or Psychotherapist Scope of Practice with Child and Adolescent Specialism with a current APC, or a Board approved person[[1]](#footnote-1). 2. Provide the Board with a self-appraisal that outlines how they have maintained currency of their psychotherapy knowledge. This self-appraisal should be detailed and provide specific information i.e. courses undertaken, books read etc. The self-appraisal should be developed with the psychotherapist’s clinical supervisor and will be guided by the Psychotherapist Core Clinical Competencies. 3. Provide the Board with a remedial plan developed in conjunction with their supervisor that demonstrates how they intend to manage and monitor their practice of psychotherapy. This plan should cover at least the next 12 months and show specifically how the psychotherapist intends to develop their psychotherapy knowledge and skills.   3.1 The frequency and duration of the supervision, and the intensity of the remedial plan, will be determined by the length of time away from active practice. It will also take into account the factors which are perceived to increase or mitigate the risk of loss of competence (see below).  3.2 A remedial plan may be waived with the agreement of the Board committee.  The Board reserves the right not to register a practitioner where the risks of loss of competence are deemed too high to be addressed by these processes. |
| **Proposed condition/s** | To ensure the safety of the public the Board may propose to put a condition/s on a psychotherapist’s scope of practice. This condition will require the practitioner’s supervisor to provide the Board with quarterly reports on the practitioner’s progress, and the practitioner will be expected to provide a quarterly report of their number of client hours per week.    In addition, this condition will normally require the practitioner to undertake weekly or fortnightly supervision for an allocated time period. Frequency and duration of supervision will relate to the practitioner’s caseload, experience, self-appraisal and recertification plan[[2]](#footnote-2).  The condition will be removed at the end of the allocated time period or earlier, provided the Board is satisfied with the progress of the practitioner, and concludes that the practitioner is not a risk to public safety. |
| **Competence to practise in the New Zealand context** | Psychotherapists returning to New Zealand should update their knowledge on the following:  The Treaty of Waitangi and relevance to psychotherapy practice in bicultural NZ;  Cultural and social dynamics and safety specifically relevant to bicultural NZ;  Understanding of the New Zealand health sector and the New Zealand legal system including working with the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC) (including the HDC Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights Regulation), and the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA). |

***Date Approved: December 2014***

1. See the Board’s supervision policy [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. These conditions may be varied in accordance with the guidelines in this policy and with the approval of the Board. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)