

## GUIDANCE NOTES

# Registration For New Zealand Qualified Applicants Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003



## The Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand

Read this guide **BEFORE** you begin to apply for registration as a physiotherapist with the General Scope of Practise.

Completing an accredited physiotherapy course is not a 'guarantee' that someone will become registered.

The information required as part of this application process enables the Board to determine whether you are safe and competent to practise before you can be registered.

All the information required from applicants helps the Board know that

- Applicants are who they say they are;
- Applicants meet current legal and Board requirements; and
- The Board can contact applicants if needed.

### ONLY COMPLETE THE APPLICATION WHEN YOU MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

- You have successfully completed an accredited course of study in physiotherapy in New Zealand
- You have (official) evidence to prove it
- You are of 'good character and reputation'

### WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO:

Supply a complete application to the Board. This means:

- Read and complete **all** relevant sections of the form
- Supply **all** the evidence in the format required (including any specific evidence required to accompany your answers on the Fitness for Registration section of your application form)
- Ensure copies of your evidence are correctly certified
- Complete the checklist, so that you don't leave anything out
- Pay the application fee
- Send your application to the Board

### WHAT THE BOARD WILL DO:

#### Either

Return your application if you haven't:

- Completed it, or
- Supplied appropriate documentation, and /or
- Certified appropriate documentation correctly
- Included payment

#### Or

Process your complete application:

- Your application is considered
- Registration is granted
- Your name and limited information about you is placed on the New Zealand Register of Physiotherapists
- An Annual Practising Certificate (APC) is issued

**Only then are you eligible to practise physiotherapy**

### PERSONAL DETAILS OF APPLICANT

You must supply a correctly certified copy of your current passport (personal details page only) or birth certificate as evidence of your identity and age. Refer to Certification Requirements on page 3 of Guidance Notes. If you have changed your name you must supply a certified copy of your marriage certificate (or statutory declaration) as evidence of a change of name.

## ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION

The Board must sight evidence of the completion of your undergraduate physiotherapy programme before registration can be granted.

### ONLY READ THIS SECTION IF YOU QUALIFIED 3 OR MORE YEARS PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR REGISTRATION

1. A statement explaining why you delayed making an application for registration in New Zealand.
2. An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae including a detailed work history and names and addresses of employers.  
[If you have practised as a physiotherapist, as a clinician, manager, educator or researcher, elsewhere than in New Zealand the Board requires:
  - A detailed account of your responsibilities, unsupervised tasks and any special projects undertaken during your work experience: dates; names and addresses of employers; location; position held; clinical areas covered, as well as any career breaks
  - Validation of your experience as a physiotherapist. Download from the website [www.physioboard.org.nz](http://www.physioboard.org.nz) the "Validation of Work History" form and follow the directions. ]
3. Evidence of completed Continuous Professional Development [CPD] in a range of appropriate activities during the preceding three years. Include evidence of your:
  - attendance at courses, conferences, journal clubs and in-services
  - participation in peer reviews
  - reflective practice
  - physiotherapy related reading.

**If you have worked overseas in any capacity as a physiotherapist since you qualified then you must also provide:  
Evidence of good standing.**

This evidence must be in the form of an original Certificate of Good Standing/Letter of Verification of Status from **all** the physiotherapy regulatory authorities you have been registered with in the last three years.

The Certificate of Good Standing or Letter of Verification of Status should provide evidence of your registration status and good standing. It is important that the certificate is current (dated within the last three months) and details your disciplinary record.

If you have practised physiotherapy in a country/state where no statutory physiotherapy regulatory authority exists, you must supply the original of a criminal record check or police clearance certificate.

**NOTE: Before submitting an application please contact the Board to seek advice on the additional fees payable for the APC. Attach the relevant documents with your application.**

## HOW MUCH DOES AN APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION COST?

The \$180.00 fee covers administrative and Board approval processes, the issuing of your initial Annual Practising Certificate (if you apply early) and the formal entry of your name on the Register of Physiotherapists.

The appropriate payment must accompany the application. Fees must be paid in NZ dollars by either credit card or cheque. Please make the cheque payable to the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand.

## ANNUAL PRACTISING CERTIFICATE (APC)

Physiotherapists who are registered in New Zealand are legally required to hold a current Annual Practising Certificate issued by the Board in order to practise. The APC year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

When the Board confirms your registration you will receive an APC free of charge for the remainder of the APC year in which you completed the undergraduate physiotherapy course.

Applications received before 31 March 2008 – the application fee is \$180.00 (inclusive of GST). You will also receive an Annual Practising Certificate (APC) free of charge, which is valid until 31 March 2008.

**NOTE: Applications received on or after 1 April 2008 – additional charges will apply. Contact the Board BEFORE submitting your application.**

## FITNESS FOR REGISTRATION

Under section 16 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) the Board must seek information to ensure the applicant is fit to be registered as a physiotherapist. All these questions must be completed – if any are left unanswered then your application will be returned.

## STATUTORY DECLARATION

The application form incorporates a statutory declaration. A statutory declaration is a declaration made under oath before an official with the legal authority to take statutory declarations.

It is up to you to ensure that the information you supply to the Board is correct and true. It is an offence to provide false and misleading information to the Board. If it is subsequently shown that you have obtained registration fraudulently, you will be removed from the Register, be unable to practise physiotherapy in New Zealand and may face imprisonment and/or a large fine.

**To achieve consistency in your paperwork (and reduce the likelihood of error) we recommend that you ask one official to both witness your statutory declaration and certify copies of your documents.**

## CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

**You will be required to send documents with your application, such as the personal details page of your passport and your degree document.**

These must be certified copies of the original documents.

### Why can't you just send us photocopies?

Unfortunately New Zealand isn't immune to document fraud. The Board looks at evidence from New Zealand and overseas every day. The Board must be sure that all documents are genuine.

Take this information along with you when you get your documents certified.

**Choose an official with the necessary legal power to certify your documents such as a Solicitor, New Zealand Court Registrar, an Officer gazetted to take statutory declarations, or a Justice of the Peace.**

To achieve consistency in your paperwork (and reduce the likelihood of error) we recommend that you ask one official to both certify copies of your documents and witness your statutory declaration.

Name and contact details of local Justices of the Peace are available in the Yellow Pages section of the telephone directory under the heading 'Justices of the Peace', or online at [www.jpfed.org.nz](http://www.jpfed.org.nz).

**To have proof of legitimate documentation the Board asks that a certifier complies with all of the following:**

- Provide his/her **full** postal address to enable the Board to seek verification;
- Sign the copy;
- Print his/her name under the signature;
- State his/her position or designation;
- Endorse the copy with his/her official seal (where applicable);
- Ensure the certified copy provided to the Board includes the statement: "Certified true copy of original document sighted"

**The most common problem is when a certifier does not provide his/her full postal address**

You may be charged a fee for certification so it's up to you to make sure you get everything that you pay for – check that the certifier has provided **all** of the above.

## TRANSLATIONS

Documents not written in English must be accompanied by an official English translation.

Make sure your translation is on official translation service letterhead and bears its signature/stamp (and full address details).

## YOUR FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PHYSIOTHERAPY BOARD OF NEW ZEALAND

**THE PHYSIOTHERAPY BOARD IS A REGULATORY AUTHORITY CONSTITUTED BY THE HEALTH PRACTITIONERS COMPETENCE ASSURANCE ACT 2003 (HPCA ACT).**

The HPCA Act governs the registration and practice of physiotherapists and other health professionals. The Act emphasises lifelong competence and involvement in continuing professional development activities.

**IF YOU BECOME REGISTERED AS A PHYSIOTHERAPIST YOUR DAY-TO DAY PRACTICE WILL BE GOVERNED BY THIS ACT.**

The Board's primary function is to protect the public of New Zealand by ensuring that a physiotherapist is **registered, safe and competent to practise**. By that the Board means:

### REGISTERED –

To legally practise physiotherapy you must be registered under the governing legislation and hold an Annual Practising Certificate (APC).

## SAFE –

Section 16 of the legislation requires that the Board seeks to establish if you are fit for registration.

You will be asked questions covering: communication; criminal convictions; physical and mental fitness as well as your educational and professional record. Referees who can supply information as to your character and reputation will be required.

## COMPETENT TO PRACTISE –

One of the functions of the Board is to accredit and monitor educational institutions and degrees, courses of study or programmes. The Board also sets standards of clinical competence, cultural competence and ethical conduct. You will therefore be required to provide evidence of your competence in the practice of physiotherapy.

This would be evidence of your successful completion of study in an undergraduate physiotherapy programme from either Auckland University of Technology or the University of Otago.

Once you become registered and during the course of your physiotherapy career the Board will contact you regarding: Annual Practising Certificate; legislative updates; newsletters and the Recertification Programme.

The Board is totally separate from the New Zealand Society of Physiotherapists. The Society is your professional association with voluntary membership.

## REMEMBER –

### THE NAME 'PHYSIOTHERAPIST' IS A PROTECTED TITLE IN NEW ZEALAND

This means only practitioners registered by the Board are legally entitled to call themselves 'physiotherapists'.

## ONCE REGISTERED

You will be expected to keep up with **all** legislation affecting the everyday practice of a physiotherapist.

*Familiarise yourself with:*

Changes to the Board's requirements via our newsletters and website  
[www.physioboard.org.nz](http://www.physioboard.org.nz)

Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003  
[www.legislation.govt.nz](http://www.legislation.govt.nz)

Health Information Privacy Code 1994  
[www.privacy.org.nz](http://www.privacy.org.nz)

Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights  
[www.hdc.org.nz](http://www.hdc.org.nz)

Accident Compensation Corporation  
[www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz)

## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 all health practitioners registered in New Zealand are required to have a scope of practice. The scope of practice describes what a health practitioner can and cannot do. At present most physiotherapists are registered with the general scope.

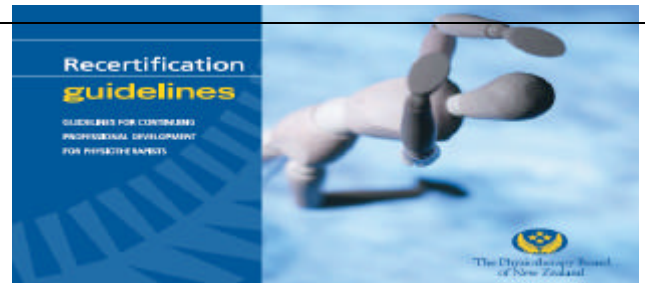
**General scope of physiotherapy: Physiotherapists are registered healthcare practitioners educated to apply scientific knowledge and clinical reasoning to assess, diagnose and manage human function. They promote mobility, health and independence; rehabilitate; and maximise potential for activity.**

## RECERTIFICATION

All registered physiotherapists are required to maintain a high level of competence and keep up with changes in the profession.

Renewing your Annual Practising Certificate is linked to recertification activities – meaning you must meet the minimum requirements of the Recertification Programme to be issued with an APC. Information on recertification is available on our website:  
[www.physioboard.org.nz](http://www.physioboard.org.nz)

Our document titled, "Recertification Guidelines" will be sent to newly registered physiotherapists, along with other important registration material. It outlines everything you will need to know about the recertification process.



## CONTACTING THE BOARD

**Postal:**

The Physiotherapy Board Of New Zealand  
PO Box 10 734  
Wellington 6143

**Physical address:**

The Physiotherapy Board Of New Zealand  
Level 8  
108 The Terrace  
Wellington 6011

**Web site:**

[www.physioboard.org.nz](http://www.physioboard.org.nz)

**Any further questions please contact the Board:**

Telephone: +64 4 471 2610 or Fax: +64 4 471 2613

**KEEP THESE GUIDANCE NOTES HANDY AS A REFERENCE**