

# FAQs for Psychologists Board roadshow – What is it all about?

## 1. Why is the Board doing a roadshow?

It has been too long since we properly spent time with the profession. As we've already signalled in newsletters and at College and Society conferences, we are in the early stages of a complete strategic reset. Part of that reset is the recognition that we need to reconnect with you. The roadshow is a great opportunity to do that, and to engage with you on important work that we are looking to progress.

We've been doing a lot of work behind the scenes over the last two years, including setting a new Strategy - "Hauora for All" with the following 5 main objectives:

Accessibility, acceptability, and equity	We will improve accessibility, acceptability, and equity in psychology practice through the use of robust data and evidence that advocates for necessary changes to the sector.
Future workforce	We will seek changes in the training and structuring of the psychology workforce so that psychology need is met by an appropriate range of competent psychological services.
Elevating Māori paradigms in psychology	We will support our workforce to be better able to deliver to tangata whenua. We will support the bicultural space to be embraced and understood.
Building trust with the psychology profession	We will strengthen engagement with the psychology profession and encourage two-way communications.
Leadership	To transform psychology in Aotearoa, we will lead the profession to embrace the challenges ahead. This will strengthen the mechanisms we have in place to protect public safety.

We've been doing a lot of groundwork to get us closer to achieving those objectives. Importantly, getting closer to these goals means making changes – and that's the purpose of our roadshow – to talk you through the changes we're looking at, and to get your input before we go further.

## 2. What is going to be discussed?

We have a lot to discuss with you! The main strands of kōrerorero will be:

- Working through some specific aspects of the new draft cultural competencies we are developing;
- Letting us know your thoughts on the wording of the current scopes of practice – e.g., what works? What doesn't work? Are they clear? Are they still fit for purpose/future-proofed? Do they need more definition?
- Reviewing and feeding back on our plans to introduce a new registration pathway for overseas trained psychologists to ensure they develop their cultural competence and other relevant skills



and knowledge for safe autonomous practice in New Zealand (consultation material to be released late May);

- Seeking your feedback on how the Board can support the whole profession to develop its ability to provide culturally safe services to Māori;

Time is tight for us to get through all this content, which unfortunately means we won't have time to chat off-topic during the formal workshop session. If you have an off-topic question, you're welcome to chat to staff during breaks and refreshments or send us an email at [info@nzpb.org.nz](mailto:info@nzpb.org.nz).

### 3. What is happening with the competencies?

The Competence Standards are perhaps the most critical document in the Board's regulatory toolkit. They underpin the Board's competence assurance functions by setting the minimum standard of competence that all practising psychologists must meet. They're the standards against which (among other things):

- New Zealand training programmes are accredited to ensure their graduates are safe to practise;
- overseas trained applicants for registration are assessed;
- psychologists undergoing competence reviews are assessed;
- individual psychologists should assess their current competence and develop their continuing competence plans.

A general review of the competencies is well overdue; however, the main driver for the review relates to the Board's strategic goals of improving equitable access to psychology services for Māori and the HPCA Act requirement that all psychologists are able to effectively and respectfully interact with Māori. We need to increase the number of Māori psychologists in the workforce, but there is no overnight solution to that. What we can do in the meantime is ensure that tauīwi psychologists are well equipped to provide culturally safe psychology services to Māori.

The Board's Māori Advisory committee – Tūmāia Kaiārahi - has been doing a lot of work on drafting new competencies for the profession. They're not quite ready for us to release for consultation, but we do have some first draft cultural competencies that we'd really like some critique on. In due course, work on the general and vocational competencies will require input from expert reference groups as happened when they were first developed, so we will also be looking for people who want to contribute to that work when it happens.

### 4. I don't work with Māori. Why would I need to know how to provide culturally safe services to Māori?

Defining who is or is not Māori is not simply a matter of making an assumption based on physical appearance, or name, or some other attribute. Too often, that information is used to confirm assumptions made by the health provider. There are many reasons (including experience of racial prejudice) that a Māori client may not identify their culture and heritage to you – creating risk that their cultural needs go undetected.

The Board's view is that, regardless of the (perceived) cultural demographic of your clientele, it is simply not possible to be a competent psychologist in New Zealand without having knowledge and understanding of, and genuine respect for the unique place of tangata whenua as New Zealand's indigenous population. This includes understanding both the historical and ongoing impact of

colonisation on Māori, and how central systems and structures (including our health systems) continue to disadvantage Māori or fail to recognise Māori cultural needs. All New Zealanders have a responsibility to be part of the solution to the inequities still experienced by Māori.

*This is not a topic that the Board intends to discuss further during the Roadshow. Registrants who are still unclear as to the reasons for the Board's position are encouraged to seek cultural supervision and undertake further research. A starting point might be "Te manu kai I te mātauranga: Indigenous psychology in Aotearoa / New Zealand" 2016, available through the NZ Psychological Society.*

## **5. What is the discussion about building the profession's cultural competence about?**

This is very much an open session - we want to hear your thoughts.

The competencies are still being developed so we don't know yet what the final standards will look like, but we think there is benefit in having some high-level discussion now about what learning avenues might be appropriate and accessible. We know that many psychologists will have already been doing their own mahi to develop their competence in this area. Others may not have done quite so much, so may have a steeper learning curve ahead of them when the new competencies come into effect.

We also know the profession is already stretched and we want to be pragmatic in terms of any new expectations we set.

There will be some small group work on this topic during the workshop, and plenty of time to tease out ideas. For example, we know that there are some good online knowledge-based courses available for health practitioners – how might we be able to support psychologists to convert knowledge they obtain from such material into practice? What is practical and realistic, but meaningful? If a solution doesn't exist, can we build it? What would we need to build it?

## **6. What is the discussion about the new registration pathway for overseas trained psychologists about?**

Shortly before the Roadshow starts, we'll be releasing a proposed new registration pathway (i.e., a new "provisional" scope of practice and related prescribed qualification) for psychologists who did not train in New Zealand. The new pathway will have two steps – the first being a qualification assessment (as is currently done), but with clearer guidance on the "hallmarks" that a qualification must have to meet our core qualification requirements. Where applicants meet this requirement, we propose that they will be registered in a "provisional" scope of practice relevant to their qualification.

Under the provisional scope of practice, they will be able to perform all the tasks a fully registered psychologist in that scope of practice can perform, but they will be under supervision in an approved work setting while they complete a cultural competence programme (this will be released as part of the consultation) and other tasks. There will be a set time in which they must complete all these requirements, at which point they can apply for registration in the related full scope of practice. This is a similar process to that used by the Medical Council.

Set out below are some reasons for this proposed change:

- We are of the view that it is simply not possible for a psychologist who was not trained in New Zealand to have the appropriate understanding of New Zealand's cultural and legal context –

including the important place of tangata whenua as our indigenous people, as well as (for example) our unique no-fault ACC system, our Privacy Act requirements, and the relevance of various health entities to psychology practice in New Zealand.

- We receive many applications from overseas trained psychologists whose qualifications are some way from demonstrating that they meet our Standards. We think that by providing better clarity on what our qualification requirements are, prospective applicants will have a clearer understanding of their prospects of success before they apply. Given there is a significant application fee for the assessment of these qualifications, we have an obligation to be transparent about the Board's minimum requirements that these qualifications must be able to demonstrate.

Some of the things we want to discuss with the profession on this topic are:

- Experiences of newly registered overseas trained psychologists in entering the profession here – what did this feel like? What support did you need? Is there anything more you would like to see in the competence programme?
- Insights of locally trained psychologists into the experiences of newly registered overseas trained psychologists starting work in New Zealand – e.g., what are the challenges for them and how are they different to the challenges facing newly graduated New Zealand trained psychologists?
- What is the potential impact on the profession? We intend to develop supervision guidelines for supporting this cohort of registrants, but we do acknowledge that we will be asking already busy psychologists to undertake additional supervisory tasks (which is likely to include quarterly supervision reports (templated) to the Board).

## **7. What is happening with the scopes of practice?**

The scopes of practice have not been substantially reviewed since the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 came into force in September 2004. In addition to the consultation on the new provisional psychologist scope of practice, the Board has begun considering the wording of the existing scopes of practice to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Before we develop this mahi further, we want to hear from the profession about issues with scopes of practice – what needs fixing, clarifying or changing? See Appendix 1 for more background on the issues we see with scopes of practice.

## **8. I can't make it to the roadshow, but I want to give feedback on one or more of the issues above.**

Please do check whether either of our online webinar times might give you an opportunity to attend remotely. Spaces are limited so don't delay if you want to register. If you can't make any of our roadshow events, there are other ways to provide feedback.

The roadshow coincides with open online consultations (closing on 31 July 2023) on proposed new registration pathways for psychologists (i.e., scope of practice and prescribed qualification) and post-registration requirements for overseas trained psychologists.

If you have not already received an email from us inviting you to participate in these consultations, you can go onto our website and access the links to the consultations there. Please do use the SurveyMonkey tool (as opposed to emailing us) to provide your feedback as it assists us with collating and analysing high numbers of responses.

We are discussing other matters at the roadshow, but that is to gather feedback and thoughts from you before we decide on our next steps. We are not yet ready to consult on new Competence Standards –

but you will have an opportunity to provide feedback when we do consult later this year. If you have key issues you want to bring up now, you might want to ask a colleague who is attending the roadshow to raise them on your behalf.

Similarly, we have not yet decided what (if any) changes we will make in relation to developing the cultural competence of the profession. Our first step is to gather input through the roadshow. If something comes out of that, we will consult before we make any decisions.

#### **9. What else do I need to do/know before I attend a Roadshow event?**

First – make sure you RSVP by 10 June to book a seat. Second - There is homework!

It would be really helpful if all attendees come prepared with an understanding of the topics for discussion so we can get your informed feedback. This means reading the answers to these questions (and the appendix below) which give more background information. You should also aim to read our consultation on proposed new registration pathways (you will receive an email invitation to participate in late May. Once the consultation is live you will be able to find a link to it on our website).

There will be small group work as part of each event – you will be randomly assigned a colour on your name tag that indicates which group you will be part of. We'll be there to help each group get organised and focused on their topic.

#### **10. I have another question about the Roadshow**

No problem. Send us an email on [info@nzpb.org.nz](mailto:info@nzpb.org.nz) and we'll do our best to answer.

## APPENDIX 1 – Background reading on scopes of practice issues

### What the HPCA Act says about scopes

#### Key sections of the Act

#### 3. Purpose of the Act

- (1) The principal purpose of this Act is to protect the health and safety of members of the public by providing for mechanisms to ensure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practice their professions
- (2) This Act seeks to attain its principal purpose by providing, among other things, -
  - a. for a consistent accountability regime for all health professions; and
  - b. for the determination for each health practitioner of the scope of practice within which he or she is competent to practice; and
  - c. for systems to ensure that no health practitioner practices in that capacity outside his or her scope of practice

#### 8. Health practitioners must not practice outside scope of practice

- (2) No health practitioner may perform a health service that forms part of a scope of practice of that profession in respect of which he or she is registered unless he or she -
  - (a) is permitted to perform that service by his or her scope of practice; and
  - (b) performs that service in accordance with any conditions stated in his or her scope of practice

#### 11. Authorities must specify scopes of practice

- (1) Each authority appointed in respect of a profession must, by notice published in the *Gazette*, describe the contents of the profession in terms of 1 or more scopes of practice.
- (2) A scope of practice may be described in any way the authority thinks fit, including, without limitation, in any 1 or more of the following ways:
  - (a) by reference to a name or form of words that is commonly understood by persons who work in the health sector;
  - (b) by reference to an area of science or learning;
  - (c) by reference to tasks commonly performed;
  - (d) by reference to illnesses or conditions to be diagnosed, treated or managed.

#### What this means ...

Psychologists must only provide psychology services that are included in the scope of practice they are registered in. If there are tasks, services or activities defined in another scope of practice, they must not do those things.

While the intention of scopes of practice is to protect the public by making it clear to practitioners the limits of their practice, the current wording for psychology scopes is broad and with much overlap. The intention of the Act is that scopes are described in such a way that it is clear to the practitioner what they are permitted to do (and therefore what they are not permitted to do).

The Act says that “Health practitioners must not practice outside scope of practice”, but without clearly distinguishing the scopes of practice from each other, a psychologist cannot be properly guided to understand what areas of practice they are permitted to engage in, and what they must avoid.

### NZ Accredited qualifications

The Board accredits vocational programmes in Clinical, Educational and Counselling psychology, along with a growing number of programmes leading to registration in the Psychologist scope of practice.

The majority of these focus on a specialty area of practice that is recognized in the title.

#### Qualifications leading to registration in the Psychologist scope of practice

Institution	Qualification
Auckland	PG Dip Applied Psychology (Applied Behaviour Analysis) PG Dip Health Psychology
Canterbury	PG Dip Child and Family Psychology PG Dip Industrial / Organisational Psychology
Massey	PG Dip Psychological Practice PG Dip Industrial / Organisational Psychology (on hold)
Victoria	PG Dip Health Psychology Practice
Waikato	PG Dip in the Practice of Psychology (Applied Behaviour Analysis) PG Dip in the Practice of Psychology (Community)
Department of Corrections	Supervision to Registration Trainee Programme
New Zealand Defence Force	Supervision to Registration Trainee Programme