



Occupational Therapy
Board of New Zealand

TE POARI WHAKAORA NGANGAHAU O AOTEAROA

FOSTERING FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE PROFESSION

Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice for Occupational Therapists

Staying competent and registered as an occupational therapist

This document describes the actions and abilities you need to stay competent as an occupational therapist and registered with the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand. The document sets out:

- the five broad areas you must be competent in
- the outcomes you must achieve
- the specific actions and abilities you must demonstrate.

The Occupational Therapy Board is responsible for setting the thresholds for competence standards under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 section i.

Your role as an occupational therapist in Aotearoa New Zealand

As an occupational therapist in Aotearoa New Zealand, you work with individuals, families, whānau, communities, organisations and populations. Your role is to increase and transform peoples participation in occupation.

This helps to promote and improve wellbeing, health and social outcomes. You aim to enhance tino rangatiratanga (self-determination), ensure equity, and enable occupational justice. You practice professionally, with a commitment to addressing both individual and systemic barriers to peoples participation in occupation.

These barriers can be cultural, educational, environmental or social; related to health, disability or spirituality. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand. It shapes the diverse historical and sociopolitical realities of Māori and all other settlers and their descendants. Understanding how Te Tiriti affects all our lives is essential for helping people participate in their desired occupation. Such understanding helps you see how systemic and individual issues can breach people's rights and limit their opportunities to participate in their chosen occupations.

The five broad areas you must be competent in

As an occupational therapist, you must
be competent in the following five areas:

- 1 Applying whakaora ngangahau occupational therapy knowledge, skills and values
- 2 Responsiveness to te Tiriti o Waitangi
- 3 Developing and sustaining partnerships
- 4 Practising in a safe, legal, ethical, sustainable and culturally competent way
- 5 Practising responsively and upholding the occupational therapy profession

These five areas are referred
to as your 'competencies'.

The outcomes you must achieve

Each competency has a desired outcome. You must achieve these outcomes in your daily practice, regardless of the setting or your level of experience.

1 Applying whakaora ngangahau occupational therapy knowledge, skills and values

You apply your knowledge, skills and values as a kaiwhakaora ngangahau occupational therapist by engaging with and supporting people and whānau to have a life they value, through enabling occupation and inclusion in communities.

2 Responsiveness to te Tiriti o Waitangi

As tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti, you recognise your role and responsibilities under te Tiriti o Waitangi and apply your knowledge to work for equitable outcomes for Māori wellbeing. Te Ao Māori, tikanga, wairua, whānau hauora and taonga such as te reo Māori are respected and supported.

3 Developing and sustaining partnerships

You promote and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation for people's health and wellbeing services.

4 Practising in a safe, legal, ethical, sustainable and culturally competent way

You act with integrity. You meet safety, legal, ethical, sustainability and cultural requirements and expectations in your professional practice.

5 Practising responsively and upholding the occupational therapy profession

You engage with your profession. You ensure your practice is professional, current, responsive and evidence informed. You take responsibility for your own professional development.

*'Client' refers to any individual, family or whānau, community, organisation or population you provide a service to.

Specific actions and abilities you must demonstrate

You will achieve each competency and its outcome by demonstrating specific actions and abilities. These are referred to as your 'performance indicators' because they indicate whether you are performing to an acceptable standard.

You are not required to demonstrate all the performance indicators all the time.



1

Applying whakaora ngangahau occupational therapy knowledge, skills and values

You apply your knowledge, skills and values as a kaiwhakaora ngangahau occupational therapist by engaging with and supporting people and whānau to have a life they value, through enabling occupation and inclusion in communities.

To achieve this competency and its outcome you must demonstrate that you:

- 1.1 Apply an occupational therapy perspective to practice.
- 1.2 Use the occupational therapy process with people and a range of appropriate strategies and tools to assess, diagnose, provide interventions, evaluate, refer on, discharge and follow up when appropriate.
- 1.3 Work with, support and educate people and whānau to optimise occupational participation and outcomes.
- 1.4 Coach, consult and collaborate to establish sustainable interventions that align with people's aspirations and promote participation and inclusion.
- 1.5 Integrate current occupational therapy theories with evidence and sound professional reasoning to optimise outcomes.
- 1.6 Apply digital technologies to engage, coach and empower people and whānau where appropriate.
- 1.7 Use a range of communication and active listening strategies with people receiving services.
- 1.8 Seek feedback from people receiving your services and engage in critical reflection to evaluate and improve your practice.
- 1.9 Record and justify your intervention and professional reasoning.
- 1.10 Facilitate and advocate for occupational justice.

2

Responsiveness to te Tiriti o Waitangi

As tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti, you recognise your role and responsibilities under te Tiriti o Waitangi and apply your knowledge to work for equitable outcomes for Māori wellbeing. Te Ao Māori, tikanga, wairua, whānau hauora and taonga such as te reo Māori are respected and supported.

To achieve this competency and its outcome, you must demonstrate that you:

- 2.1 Support tino rangatiratanga for Māori who use your services to improve their wellbeing and social outcomes.
- 2.2 Apply whānau tikanga, wairua and hauora to improve outcomes.
- 2.3 Increase your knowledge of historical, structural and systemic barriers that have led to and continue to lead to inequitable health outcomes for Māori and apply this knowledge in your practice.
- 2.4 Work towards equitable health, occupational, educational and social outcomes for Māori, recognising different Māori, iwi, hapū and whānau may require different approaches and resources.
- 2.5 Apply reflective practice to identify and address conscious and unconscious bias, discrimination and racism to support you to embrace whānau tikanga.
- 2.6 Ensure practice reflects an understanding that Māori data sovereignty is taonga and collaborate with Māori so that any data is appropriately collected, used, stored and destroyed.
- 2.7 Provide services reflective of tikanga, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga as encapsulated in te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- 2.8 Seek guidance from kaumātua or a Māori adviser to improve the outcomes of the services you provide for whānau.
- 2.9 Consult with kaumātua or a Māori adviser, if needed, to help you identify and resolve issues impacting whānau due to systemic bias in governmental or organisational policy and decision making.
- 2.10 Develop relationships with and refer whānau to Māori who work in health or education, iwi providers and Whānau Ora.
- 2.11 Enhance your understanding and use of te reo Māori and other taonga.

3 Developing and sustaining partnerships

You promote and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and cooperation for peoples health and wellbeing services.

To achieve this competency and its outcome you must demonstrate that you:

- 3.1** Work proactively and respectfully with others to ensure the best outcomes, keeping people and whānau at the centre of practice.
- 3.2** Work collaboratively at all times by communicating in transparent and mana-enhancing ways, with the person receiving your service and/or whānau and relevant others involved.
- 3.3** Enable the perspectives and contributions of people, whānau and relevant others to be heard and incorporated into service delivery.
- 3.4** Co-design, collaborate and consult with the person, whānau and team to ensure coordinated service delivery toward agreed goals.
- 3.5** Work collaboratively with others to identify and address any limitations or cultural assumptions that affect the quality of service.
- 3.6** Support team practice by sharing your knowledge, skills, ideas and resources.
- 3.7** Use devices, apps and other digital tools to benefit your networks, teams, practice and people receiving your service.

4 Practising in a safe, legal, ethical, sustainable and culturally competent way

You act with integrity. You meet safety, legal, ethical, sustainability and cultural requirements and expectations in your professional practice

To achieve this competency and its outcome, you must demonstrate that you:

- 4.1 Comply with the legislation, regulations, service standards, policies, data security requirements, privacy requirements, and professional and ethical guidelines relevant to your area of practice.
- 4.2 Ensure people receiving your services are fully informed and are making informed choices.
- 4.3 Clearly identify the boundaries of the service you can provide based on the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (the Board) scope of practice, competencies, Code of Ethics and supplementary guidance.
- 4.4 Manage the boundaries between personal and professional relationships with care and integrity.
- 4.5 Identify, declare and promptly address potential conflicts of interest.
- 4.6 Adapt your practice to meet the occupational needs and wellbeing of the people and whānau receiving your service, respecting differences in cultures, identity, ethnicity and how people relate to their natural environment.
- 4.7 Advocate for sustainable resources and services to be available or developed to meet the needs of different communities and people.
- 4.8 Regularly evaluate and address any risks in your own level of safety and in your legal, ethical and cultural competence.
- 4.9 Recognise and respect diversity, including people's values, beliefs, attitudes, gender, SOGIESC, cultural identity and language.
- 4.10 Evaluate when digital technologies are legal, ethically and culturally appropriate and use them to facilitate equitable and sustainable health outcomes.
- 4.11 Keep appropriate records of the services you provide. These records are suitable for evaluating your services, professional performance and business.
- 4.12 Manage your own health and wellbeing so that you are fit to practise and take action when personal health and wellbeing affects your safety and fitness to practise, as required by legislation and the Board.
- 4.13 Actively seek out and incorporate practices that respect the environment, reduce impacts on climate change and protect the wellbeing of Papatūānuku.

5 Practising responsively and upholding the occupational therapy profession

You engage with your profession. You ensure your practice is professional, current, responsive and evidence-informed. You take responsibility for your own professional development.

To achieve this competency and its outcome, you must demonstrate that you:

- 5.1** Critically appraise professional literature, research and/or mātauranga Māori to update your knowledge of current theories, techniques and technologies and integrate appropriate current developments into practice.
- 5.2** Reflect on your competence, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, then work to enhance your practice through further development activities.
- 5.3** Support the development and promotion of occupational therapy knowledge, resources and services.
- 5.4** Actively support and engage in supervision arrangements at appropriate levels for yourself, occupational therapists and others.
- 5.5** Actively support occupational therapy students and their educational placements.
- 5.6** Engage in ongoing professional development related to or using digital technologies.
- 5.7** Draw from and contribute to research that furthers occupational therapy practice.
- 5.8** Lead and support the occupational therapy profession to meet changing and future developments in health and wellbeing.

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