



**Midwifery Council**

Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu

# Be Safe.

PAPER

03.

## ANNUAL PRACTISING CERTIFICATES

July 2017

### Annual Practising Certificates (APC)

As with all registered health professionals, midwives must renew their practising certificate every year. Practising without a current certificate is illegal.

The role of the Midwifery Council is to make sure midwives meet the requirements laid down in legislation and if they do, to issue them with practising certificates. If you have, for whatever reason fallen behind in meeting the requirements, you may be given a time-limited practising certificate in order to get yourself up to date. In a few cases, midwives' applications for a practising certificate have been declined.

The rigour and integrity of the process is important in the strengthening of public confidence in the midwifery profession. It helps to demonstrate that midwives are competent to do the job each and every year they practise.

Completing the various requirements for an APC also reassures midwives and builds confidence that they meet the fitness to practise requirements. It's an opportunity to get up to date with the latest professional practice, to maintain and enhance your midwifery skills and knowledge, and to understand the changing needs of the public and other healthcare professionals.



### Be Safe

Be Safe is a series of papers highlighting safety, best practice and professional standards in midwifery.

### The Midwifery Council

The Midwifery Council is the guardian of professional standards in midwifery. It makes sure midwives meet and maintain professional standards of education, conduct and performance so that they deliver high quality healthcare throughout their careers. The safety of mothers and babies comes first.

## Quality assurance

Quality assurance is a priority for the Midwifery Council. Annual Practising Certificates fit into a system of checks and balances that are designed to promote quality throughout your career.

In the issuing of Annual Practising Certificates, the Council assesses the participation of each midwife in various programmes designed to enhance midwifery practice.

- Recertification Programme (every midwife with a practising certificate).

The following programmes also need to be completed by some midwives:

- First Year of Practice Programme (new graduate midwives).
- Midwifery Return to Practice Programme (midwives returning after 3+ years out of practice).
- Overseas Competence Programme (Internationally Qualified Midwives).

Engaging in the Recertification Programme is one of the ways you demonstrate ongoing competence. The Programme requires all midwives to undertake a range of activities within a three year period.

All newly qualified midwives must enrol in and complete the First Year of Practice Programme. Recently qualified midwives should start practising as soon as possible while their skills and knowledge are up to date and fresh. Participation in the programme means that they are mentored and supported in their first year to keep adding to their knowledge and skills.

A midwife who returns to work after more than three years must complete a Return to Practice Programme and take part in a Midwifery Standards Review (MSR) at the end of the second year of practice.

Internationally qualified midwives must also complete an Overseas Competence Programme, and an MSR at the end of their second year.

## Not up to date in these programmes?

If you are not up to date, please contact the Council to discuss this. The Council knows there are various reasons a midwife may not be up to date and will work with you on a plan on how you can meet the requirements.



## Apply at the right time

If you hold a practising certificate for the current year and want to practise in the first quarter of the next year (starting 1 April), you must apply for your APC during February/March.

All Annual Practising Certificates expire on 31 March, and you can't practise without one.

If you are returning to practice at any other time during the year, please contact the Council to discuss your circumstances and so that your Recertification Programme timeframe can be adjusted.

If you don't renew your Annual Practising Certificate by 31 March each year, you will have to stop practising at that date

## Confirm your emergency skills are up to date

Every year you need to take part in a minimum one-day course in maternity emergencies which includes updates in maternal and neonatal resuscitation.

## Demonstrate that you have worked as a midwife

You must confirm that you have practised across the scope of midwifery during the last three years so we know your experience is current and comprehensive. Evidence of how you meet this requirement should be in your portfolio.

Midwives practising without an APC will have no indemnity insurance, nor be able to claim maternity fees under S88, and their clients may not be covered by ACC.

## Statutory Declarations

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act requires the Council to be satisfied that midwives are competent and fit to practise before issuing a practising certificate. That means signing the Declarations (see pg 4).

## Here's what the Council looks for in an application:

- The Statutory Declarations
- Any overdue Recertification Programme items
- Engagement in other competence programmes if a condition of practice
- Any issues identified during the audit of a midwife's portfolio
- Any competence, health, or discipline issues that have been drawn to Council's attention
- Portfolio showing your recent work
- Any other matters that the Council has flagged for consideration
- Payment

Meeting the APC requirements reassures midwives and builds confidence that you meet the fitness to practise requirements.

## The Declarations

- I declare that I am competent to practise within the Midwifery Scope of Practice.
- I declare that I am meeting the requirements of the midwifery Recertification Programme within the required timeframe set down in the programme
- I declare either that I have no conditions on my APC or, if I have, that I have complied with them fully.
- I declare that I have no physical or mental condition or disability that could adversely affect my ability to practise as a midwife which has not been disclosed to the Council.
- I declare that I have practised across the midwifery scope at some time during the preceding three years.
- I declare that I have no outstanding fines or costs owing to the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.
- I declare that I have no convictions of a criminal or civil nature which have not been fully disclosed to the Midwifery Council.
- I declare that the information that I have given in this application is true and correct in every respect.
- I will pay the gazetted fee by credit card or online banking.
- I agree to my personal information being held by the Midwifery Council and for it to be passed to the Ministry of Health for the purposes of: a) payment of maternity fees, b) monitoring and auditing Midwifery prescribing behaviour, c) providing each practitioner with a national unique identifier, and d) collating midwifery workforce data.

**The APC process is a chance to review your engagement in midwifery practice and how you have met your professional requirements. It's the most obvious way you reassure the public that you are effective and safe in your practice of midwifery.**

Go to [www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz](http://www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz) for more information.

### Contact Us

Phone: +64 4 499 5040

General enquiries: [info@midwiferycouncil.health.nz](mailto:info@midwiferycouncil.health.nz)

## Tips

- Even if you work part-time or intermittently, you still require a practising certificate that is current.
- Don't forget to include your payment. An Annual Practising Certificate won't be processed without it.
- Remember, declarations are legal documents, and any false statements will be taken very seriously by the Midwifery Council.
- Make sure you only tick the declarations that apply to you.
- Ensure your contact details are up to date.
- If the name you are now practising under differs from that on the Register, please contact the Council.

## Data shows

By the end of April 2017

# 3,033

APC applications were received, and only

# seven

received 'intention to decline' letters because they did not meet the requirements

