MIDWIFERY COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

RECERTIFICATION PROGRAMME

A summary for midwives

AS REVISED
from 1 April 2014
Contents

Recertification Programme - a summary for midwives

Introduction
Why is Recertification a requirement?

Components of the Recertification Programme:

1. Declaration of competence to practise
2. Practice across the scope over a three-year period
3. Maintenance of a professional portfolio
4. Completion of compulsory education
   - COMBINED EMERGENCY SKILLS DAY
   - MIDWIFERY PRACTICE DAY
   - BREASTFEEDING

5. Elective education and Professional Activity
   - ELECTIVE EDUCATION
   - PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

6. Midwifery Standards Review
   New graduate midwives/ internationally qualified midwives completing Overseas Competence programme
   Audit

The relationship between the Competencies for Entry to the Register and the Standards of Practice
   Rolling three year period

FAQs

IMPORTANT: Click or Press to go to that page or website
Recertification Programme - a summary for midwives

Introduction

Participation in the Midwifery Council Recertification Programme is compulsory for all midwives who wish to maintain a practising certificate within New Zealand. During 2013 the Recertification Programme was revised by the Midwifery Council taking into consideration feedback received from midwives and stakeholders. This document serves to provide you with straightforward information to help you meet the requirements of the Recertification Programme. Other resources can be found on the Midwifery Council website: www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/recertification-courses/

Why is Recertification a requirement?

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 established a regulatory framework with the primary purpose of protecting the health and safety of the public by ensuring health practitioners are competent and fit to practise their professions. Section 4 (2) (d) of the Act contains a provision that stops a regulatory authority, in the case of applications for practising certificates, from approving those applications unless the authority is satisfied that the health practitioners concerned are competent to practise in accordance with their scopes of practice.

Under Section 41 of the Act, the Midwifery Council resolved that all registered midwives must participate in its Recertification Programme in order to meet the competence requirements necessary for a practising certificate to be issued. Through this process, the midwifery profession collectively engages in a process of self-reflection and professional development that will improve standards of midwifery care and contribute to ongoing quality improvement in the midwifery workforce. Public safety is assured through a midwifery workforce that demonstrates both professionalism and competence.

You are required to engage in the Recertification Programme if you hold practising certificate regardless of whether or not you work.
Components of the Recertification Programme:

- There are six individual components within the programme:
  1. A declaration of competence to practise within the Midwifery Scope of Practice
  2. Practice across the Scope over a three-year period
  3. Maintenance of a professional portfolio
  4. Completion of all compulsory education
  5. Completion of 30 points over a three-year period of effective education and professional activity: a minimum of 15 points in each category over three years
  6. Participation in a Midwifery Standards Review

1. Declaration of competence to practise
When you sign your application for a practising certificate, you have to declare that you are competent to practise across the Midwifery Scope. During each three-year recertification period, you need to self-assess against the Competencies for Entry to the Register® and make your own professional judgment as to the areas in which you should engage in further education and clinical experience so you can make this declaration. By declaring that you are competent to practise, you are stating that you are participating in, and meeting the requirements of, the Recertification Programme.

2. Practice across the scope over a three-year period
The Competencies set the expectation that a midwife is capable of providing care to a woman across the childbirth experience, on her own responsibility, and in partnership with the woman. The Council expects that over the three-year period you will make sure you have maintained your competence at the level of entry to the Register across all aspects of the scope. If you work day to day in only one particular aspect of the midwifery scope, you are not expected to be an expert in the other aspects but you are expected to maintain at least entry level competence. The length and type of practice experience in which you need to engage in order to demonstrate you are competent may be different from what another midwife needs to do, that is up to your professional judgment.

3. Maintenance of a professional portfolio
This is a collection point for information about your practice. Information contained in your portfolio is evidence of your competence to practise and participation in the Recertification Programme. The Council does not specify any particular format to use.

4. Completion of compulsory education
There are three different elements to compulsory education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Combined Emergency Skills Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding Workshop + Breastfeeding Activity</td>
<td>Once every 3 years*</td>
<td>Half day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midwifery-Practice Day</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Once every 3 years*</td>
<td>Half day</td>
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* Timetables differ for new graduate midwives in their first year of practice and for internationally qualified midwives undertaking the Overseas Competence Programme.

5. Completion of professional activity

**Combined Emergency Skills Day**
The content and delivery of the Combined Emergency Skills Day was decided by the Council in conjunction with all workshop providers with the aim of being consistent across the country. It comprises a minimum of 5 hours (at the standard level, of the NZRC framework). Neonatal Resuscitation updates and childbirth emergency skills (bleeding emergencies, shoulder dystocia, birth asphyxia and cord prolapse). Providers of the Combined Emergency Skills Day and the content of the workshop must be approved by the Council.

**Midwifery Practice Day**
This practice day will comprise topical midwifery issues and will have a practical emphasis that focuses on putting a clinical picture together and recognising normal to abnormal. New graduates in the Midwifery First Year of Practice Programme and internationally qualified new graduate midwives are required to participate in a Midwifery Practice Day within their first year of practice. Internationally qualified midwives in the Overseas Competence Programme must complete the day within two years of being issued their first practising certificate.

**Breastfeeding**
The Council recognises that the BFHI requirements of DHBs exceed the Council’s minimum expectations, but sets a minimum requirement that you attend a half day breastfeeding workshop that is in line with the WHO ‘Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding’ and the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative. Expectations, but sets a minimum requirement that you attend a half day breastfeeding workshop that is in line with the WHO ‘Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding’ and the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative.

You can choose to credit a specific course as your compulsory breastfeeding education and attendance at any other breastfeeding courses can be used towards elective education points.

The ‘additional activity’ may be any other breastfeeding activities. This may include the second half of a breastfeeding study day, conferences, seminars, workbooks and online learning.

5. Elective education and Professional Activity

Over each three year period (that is, the three years you have worked prior to the date you are applying for a practising certificate), you must collect a minimum of 30 points of elective education and professional activity. This is further broken down into a minimum of 15 points for elective education and 15 points for professional activity.

You may not use the same course to meet the compulsory requirement and to gain points.

**Elective Education**

All elective education has points allocated for attendance and is listed by topic and location at: [www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/recertification-elective-education/](http://www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/recertification-elective-education/)

Lists are continually updated as courses are added.

**Professional Activities**

Professional activities are additional roles and responsibilities that midwives engage in which broaden and develop the individual midwife and enhance the midwifery profession.

Examples include precepting students, attendance at journal clubs, voluntary midwifery service overseas. A considerable number of professional activities have had points allocated to them and these are listed at [www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/recertification-professional-activities/](http://www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/recertification-professional-activities/)

As with elective education, evidence of the activity must be incorporated into your portfolio and you are expected to provide a brief written reflection on your learning and professional development.

2 This period can be extended in consultation with Council if you do not practise for a period of between 6 and 18 months.

6. Midwifery Standards Review

All midwives are required to undergo a Midwifery Standards Review (MSR) every two years although this timeframe may be extended or reduced at the discretion of the reviewers. New graduate midwives, both New Zealand-educated and internationally qualified, are required to undertake a MSR at the end of their first year of practice.

The Council contracts the New Zealand College of Midwives to undertake MSR. You should contact the New Zealand College of Midwives to book and to discuss any queries you have. The email address for MSR is admin@nzcom.org.nz and information is available on its website: [www.midwife.org.nz/quality-practice/midwifery-standards-review](http://www.midwife.org.nz/quality-practice/midwifery-standards-review)

Prior to your MSR, you are expected to provide information to the review panel including feedback and evaluation from consumers and colleagues, statistics or clinical outcomes from practice and your own self-assessment against the Competencies for Entry to the Register of Midwives and/or the NZCOM Standards for Practice. You take your portfolio to the review for discussion. On completion of your review, the panel will assist you to establish your personal Professional Development Plan for the coming years. This may include identifying areas of personal development, professional development or education. You receive a certificate as evidence of your participation in the review and this should be kept in your portfolio.

MSR is a confidential process and NZCOM does not inform the Midwifery Council of details of your review, other than the fact that you have undertaken it. However, if the reviewers have reason to believe that a midwife who is undertaking a MSR may pose a risk of harm to the public by practise below the required standard of competence, the reviewer may give the Registrar written notice of the reasons on which that belief is based.

New graduate midwives/internationally qualified midwives completing Overseas Competence programme

New Zealand-educated new graduate midwives are required to complete the Combined Emergency Skills Day, the Midwifery Practice Day and Midwifery Standards Review in their first year of practice.

Internationally qualified new graduate midwives are required to complete the Combined Emergency Skills Day, the Midwifery Practice Day, Breastfeeding and Midwifery Standards Review in their first year of practice.

Internationally qualified midwives registering from overseas are required to complete the annual Combined Emergency Skills Day as well as the other compulsory education components and a Midwifery Standards Review in the first two years of practice in New Zealand. This is in addition to the Overseas Competence programme.

Audit

Each year, a percentage of midwives are audited by the Midwifery Council to ensure they provide evidence of their ongoing competence to practise and their participation in the Recertification Programme. Midwives will receive a letter asking that they provide their portfolio to the secretariat; they will usually have about six weeks to do this. Afterwards they will be provided with feedback from the audit.

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3 This period can be extended in consultation with Council if you do not practise for a period of between 6 and 18 months.
The relationship between the Competencies for Entry to the Register and the Standards of Practice

Some midwives have queried the relationship between the Competencies and the Standards, particularly in regard to the need to demonstrate working across the Midwifery Scope of Practice for the purposes of Recertification.

The Competencies for Entry to the Register relate to the Midwifery Scope of Practice and set the minimum standards required for public safety. Whereas the Scope of Practice is a broad statement that describes what midwifery is, the four Competencies and their related criteria define the expectations of how a midwife will work within the Scope.

The Standards of Practice as developed by the NZ College of Midwives provide the benchmark for the midwife’s practice and the appropriate use of midwifery’s body of knowledge. Every Standard and its associated criteria can be linked to at least one of the Competencies, as indicated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Reflected in:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Competency 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;&quot;The midwife works in partnership with the woman throughout the maternity experience&quot;</td>
<td>Standard 1&lt;br&gt;&quot;The midwife works in partnership with the woman&quot;&lt;br&gt;Standard 2&lt;br&gt;&quot;The midwife upholds each woman’s right to free and informed choice and consent throughout the childbirth experience&quot;</td>
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| **Competency 2**<br>"The midwife applies comprehensive theoretical and scientific knowledge with the affective and technical skills needed to provide effective and safe midwifery care" | Standard 3<br>"The midwife collates and documents comprehensive assessments of the woman and/or baby’s health and well-being"<br>Standard 4<br>"The midwife maintains purposeful, on-going, updated records and makes them available to the woman and other relevant persons."<br>Standard 5<br>"Midwifery care is planned with the woman."<br>Standard 6<br>"Midwifery actions are prioritised and implemented appropriately with no midwifery action or omission placing the woman at risk."
| **Competency 3**<br>"The midwife promotes practices that enhance the health of the woman and her family/whanau and which encourage their participation in her health care." | Standard 7<br>"The midwife is accountable to the woman, to herself, to the midwifery profession and to the wider community for her practice."
| **Competency 4**<br>"The midwife upholds professional midwifery standards and uses professional judgment as a reflective and critical practitioner when providing midwifery care." | Standard 7<br>"The midwife is accountable to the woman, to herself, to the midwifery profession and to the wider community for her practice."
| **Competency 5**<br>"The midwife negotiates the completion of the midwifery partnership with the woman." | Standard 7<br>"The midwife negotiates the completion of the midwifery partnership with the woman." |
| **Competency 6**<br>"The midwife evaluates her own practice." | Standard 8<br>"The midwife evaluates her own practice."
| **Competency 7**<br>"The midwife develops and shares midwifery knowledge and initiates and promotes research." | Standard 10<br>"The midwife develops and shares midwifery knowledge and initiates and promotes research."

Consideration of each Competency and its criteria may provide a guide to areas in which you need to update yourself. If you have gaps in skills or knowledge, the fact you have identified them and can discuss in your Midwifery Standards Review how you will address them, demonstrates to the profession, consumers and the Council that you are meeting your professional responsibilities. Key panels will be looking for a process of self assessment rather than requiring a detailed assessment against both the Competencies and the Standards.

**Rolling three year period**

Each year when you apply for your practising certificate, you declare that you have practised midwifery during the previous three years and that you have met the requirements of the Recertification Programme. If you have held a practising certificate for all three of the years up to the date you are applying, you are expected to have met all the requirements of the Recertification Programme over that period. If you held a practising certificate in 2012/2013, 2013/2014, 2014/2015, when you apply for a practising certificate for the 2015/2016 year, you need to be able to declare you have met the requirements. How that might look in practice is shown on the planner which can be downloaded from www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/recertification-programme-competence-based-practising-certificates/

If you have a period of not working as a midwife, you should contact the secretariat to discuss either an extension of the three year period or to start the recertification cycle again. This can be done in conjunction with your self assessment as to competence so you consider whether you need to undertake any specific courses immediately, for example the Combined Emergency Skills Day. This information is noted on the Register.

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3 NZ College of Midwives, Midwives Handbook for Practice, 2008; p 14.
FAQs

Q. I only work part-time. Do I need to participate in the Recertification Programme?
A. Yes, all midwives holding a Practising Certificate must participate. The number of hours that each individual midwife works does not make any difference to the requirements.

Q. How many times do I have to complete the Combined Emergency Skills Day over the three year recertification period?
A. Three times. The Combined Emergency Skills Day is an annual requirement and is required to be completed each year.

Q. I normally work as an LMC but I have been asked to teach on a compulsory course including the Combined Emergency Skills Day. Do I have to attend the course?
A. Midwives who teach may choose to either acknowledge that they have received the education that is required for the component that they teach or they can self-allocate professional activity points (5 per presentation). Educators who teach as part of their paid employment cannot allocate professional activity points.

Q. What sort of evidence is required in my portfolio?
A. For compulsory and elective courses or workshops, you should be provided with a certificate of attendance. For courses that have had points allocated by the Council, the certificate will show those points. For other courses, professional activities or when you teach on a course, formal evidence could be a confirmation of appointment, your presentation notes, your course evaluations forms, details of an article published, a letter from your manager, feedback from recipients or other confirmation of your activity provided by a third party. The dates of when courses and activities were undertaken should also be recorded.

Q. How long does my reflection need to be?
A. There is no word limit. What is needed is an explanation of relevance to practice or how new research or learning can be incorporated into your practice. This can be described in a few paragraphs.

Q. I am having a baby in March and will not be working for the whole of the practice year. Can I obtain an extension for my recertification period?
A. Yes but if you are not going to be working, you should consider whether you need a practising certificate or not.

Q. While I am on maternity leave I plan to complete a small number of postnatal visits. Do I need to engage in recertification?
A. Providing postnatal care is practice as a midwife for which you require a practising certificate. You must remain fully engaged in the Recertification Programme.

Q. I have been working as a midwife overseas for the last two years. What do I need to do about recertification?
A. As long as you can verify you have practised midwifery and provide evidence of continuing education while you were away, you will be eligible for a practising certificate. Your recertification cycle will recommence on your return. The Council encourages you to keep documentation of any continuing education you undertook whilst overseas and to include this in your portfolios once you return home.