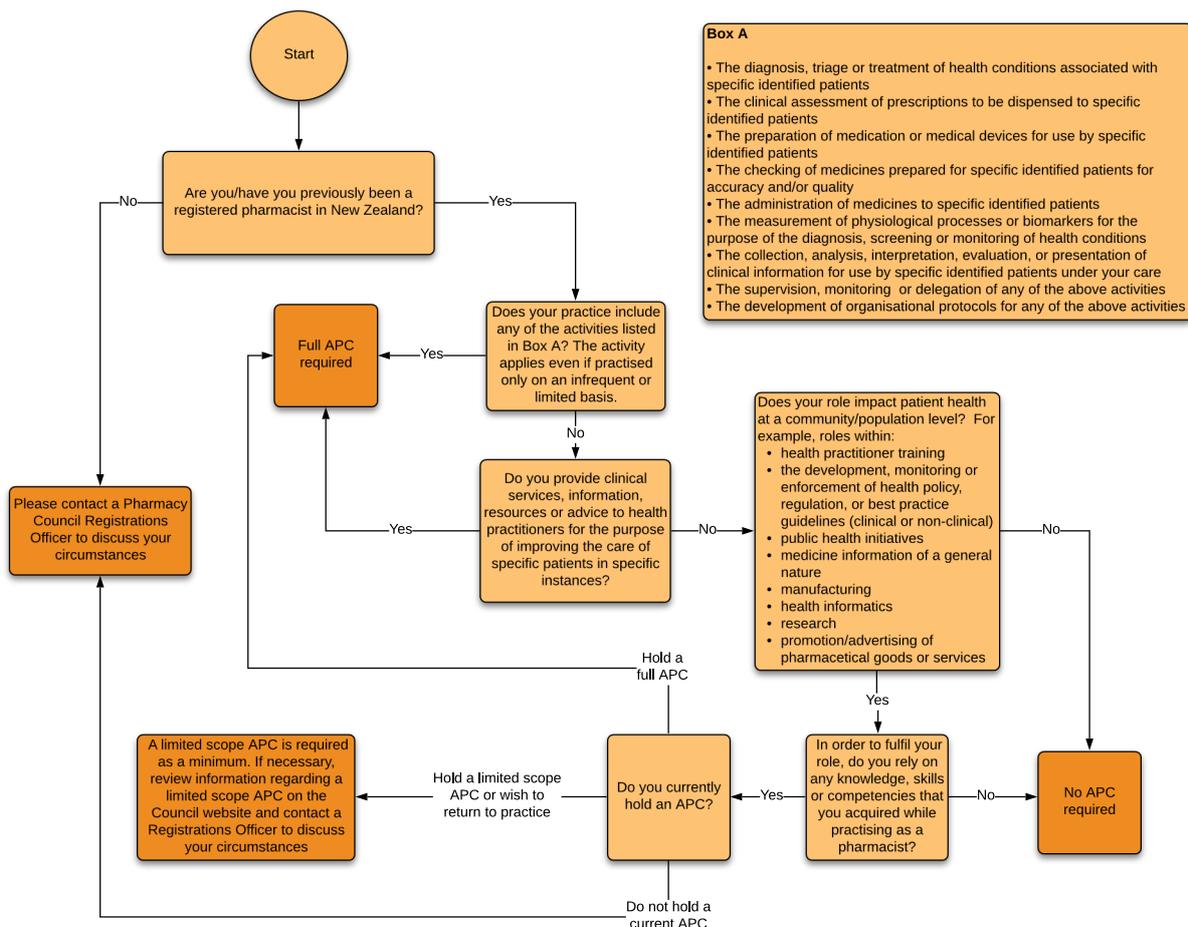


Pharmacist scope of practice – Guidance

While the majority of pharmacists work in community or hospital pharmacy roles, increasingly, many pharmacists are utilising their unique skills, knowledge and perspective to improve healthcare in New Zealand from positions outside of these traditional roles. These roles may not include direct patient contact or the dispensing of medicines. Pharmacy is also practised when a pharmacist influences the healthcare of specific patients via an intermediary health provider, or when practice impacts healthcare at a community or population level. The Pharmacist scope of practice and the competence standards recognise and enable this.

As pharmacists have found novel ways to contribute, it has become more difficult to define what a pharmacist is. Notwithstanding, the tool below is designed to offer pharmacists guidance on whether their role is within the scope of practice (and therefore requires an annual practising certificate). Essentially, a pharmacist should consider whether their practice requires unique pharmacy related competencies. Whether a pharmacist is working within the Pharmacist scope of practice or not is independent of their employer's preference that they maintain registration or not; and is entirely dependent on the activities involved in the role and the origin of competence. The diagram below is designed to help determine if your role falls within the scope.



Example 1 – Pharmacy roles may be outside of a dispensary

A pharmacist working in an information technology role may not require an annual practising certificate if their role is purely technical and could be fulfilled by other IT personnel without

pharmacy background. However, if the pharmacist's role involved interpreting clinical data or developing best practice treatment guidelines an annual practising certificate would be required.

Similar circumstances could occur in management roles. If a manager's role is restricted to non-clinical aspects (e.g., financial, human resources management) and could be fulfilled by a non-pharmacist, then an annual practising is not required. If the role includes development or monitoring of health strategies, then it is probable that a certificate is required.

These roles influence health at a community/population level.

Example 2 – The basis of your competence matters

An academic that teaches pharmacy students will require an annual practising certificate if their competence was gained via pharmacy practice. A lecturer teaching pharmacy law and ethics is working within the Pharmacist scope of practice if their competence is based on prior pharmacy experience. However, the same role would not be within the pharmacist scope of practice if the lecturer's competence is based on legal practice.

It is also likely that any teaching of pharmacy practice or ethical principles that underlie the profession would be within the Pharmacist scope of practice. It is unlikely that someone without prior pharmacist experience would possess the context to convey these concepts.

Competence in these roles influences the behaviour of future health professionals and therefore impacts health at a population level.

Example 3 – Pharmacists do not have to be in patient-facing roles

A pharmacist that provides medicines information to patient-facing practitioners for a specific patient in a specific set of circumstances requires an annual practising certificate. This role has no patient contact but does produce recommendations on which patient-facing clinicians base decisions. Although one step removed from direct patient contact, poor performance will directly translate to compromised patient safety. Similarly, a pharmacist that produces general medicine information is also working within the Pharmacist scope of practice. Their practice contributes to health at a population level.

If any role falls within the Pharmacist scope of practice, hours worked will contribute to the 450 hours of practice per three-year period required to maintain an annual practicing certificate. If a role does not fall within the scope of practice it is still possible to maintain an annual practising certificate by fulfilling requirements via other means.

Information on a limited scope APC can be found on the Council [website](#) under the heading "Returning to practise in a role that does not involve direct-patient care". This option is only available for pharmacists who wish to return to practice after being on the non-practising register or who have been removed from the register.

If you are unsure whether you require an annual practising certificate please contact us at enquiries@pharmacycouncil.org.nz