



ANZCA
FPM

May 18, 2023

Medical Council of New Zealand | Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa

e mail: sconsultation@mcnz.org.nz

Dear Mrs Joan Simeon,

Submission on Medical Certification

The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), the Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM), is committed to setting the highest standards of clinical practice in the fields of anaesthesia, perioperative medicine and pain medicine. As one of the largest medical colleges in Australia, ANZCA is responsible for the postgraduate training programs of anaesthetists and specialist pain medicine physicians, in addition to promoting best practice and ongoing continuous improvement that contributes to a high-quality health system.

Thank you for the invitation to provide feedback on the revised guidelines relating to the issuing of Medical Certificates. ANZCA commends the Medical Council New Zealand on this work and broadly supports the revised guidelines. We consider that they provide more and updated guidance, and helpful examples.

Specifically, the revised statement:

- Clarifies the **requirement** to get patient permission for sharing of medical information and diagnoses (rather than “should have a conversation with....”)
- Updates and expands on the provision of “fitness to drive” certificates – which was absent from the existing statement.
- Gives helpful detail in the section about assessment of Mental Disorders (replacing a more limited section in the existing statement), and reflecting the guidelines related to the operation of the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992, [updated and issued in 2020](#).
- Provides useful examples of when and why backdating of certificates might be appropriate.
- Gives some additional guidance around the processes, timeframes, and legal responsibilities for certifying death or signing crematorium forms – including the need for cultural considerations to be considered.

An area that would benefit from further exploration is that of shared communication and responsibility for issuing medical certificates where a multi-disciplinary team (as is usually the case in the management of chronic pain) is involved in the planning and delivery of care.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on these revised guidelines.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Duncan Wood', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Duncan Wood,
Chair, New Zealand Faculty of Pain Medicine

For further information please contact:
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