



Dietitians Board

Te Mana Mātanga Mātai Kai

Unite
against
COVID-19

Tēnā Koe

The Dietitians Board is aware of the enormous pressure that our registered health professionals are under across all health care settings as part of New Zealand's response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In particular we recognise the work Dietitians are doing to ensure that they can provide the best possible care to their patients & clients and also help to protect the public and themselves during this challenging time.

We acknowledge that New Zealand's move to Alert Level 4 is very upsetting and has far-reaching implications for everyone, both now and going forward. We ask that you follow the direction of the Government, health authorities and your employers at this time. Providers of 'essential services', and those that support them, have been notified; everyone else is instructed to stay home. People can work from home as long as they follow isolation rules.

Impact of COVID – 19

We recognise that in highly challenging circumstances, you may be asked to depart from established procedures in order to care for patients. If concerns are raised about your decisions and actions, it will always be considered, taking into account the factors relevant to the environment, resources, guidelines or protocols in place at the time.

It is important that you stay safe & well, practise within your areas of competence and obtain training should you be asked to upskill to deliver interprofessional services. Most importantly, do not place yourself or your colleagues/household in danger to treat any patient in an emergency situation.

The Board has been considering a number of issues related to COVID-19 in order to support the Government, the Ministry of Health and the profession in protecting the public and themselves, supporting our staff and ensuring business continuity.

You are encouraged to read Board communications sent via email and to keep up-to-date through the following websites:

- Up-to-date information on COVID-19 and the New Zealand response - [Click here](#)
- Health practitioner specific advice on COVID-19 - [Click here](#)

The Board's Secretariat has been liaising with regulators and the Ministry of Health to stay up to date and ensure Registered Health Professionals are able to practise. We have good IT support in place to ensure we can work from home and Sue & Lizz remain contactable by the usual methods of phone and email. Enquiry volumes may be high, however, they will respond as promptly as they are able.

Annual Declarations

It is important you make your Annual Declaration by 31 March to ensure you have a current APC for 1 April 2020 if you will be working.

To expedite the process **for those still to make their Annual Declaration:**

- The Board has introduced temporary practical changes to support Registered Dietitians making their Annual Declaration for the upcoming practising year (starting 1 April) and meeting Recertification requirements for the current practising year (ending 31 March).

- You can now make your practising declaration for the 2020/2021 year without needing to log your CPD at this time.
- The requirement to log CPD for the 2019/2020 practising year has been extended until 30 June 2020.
- From 1 April 2020 **both** the 2019/2020 and the 2020/2021 year will be available – **please ensure you log your CPD against the correct year.**
- Practitioners selected for Audit will be:
 - Audited from 1 April if they have submitted by 31 March 2020
 - Audited once they submit between now and 30 June 2020

If you have difficulty with fee payment as a result of COVID-19, please contact the Board's office immediately and we will assist where we can - for example there are payment options available.

Ministry of Health Initiative

The Ministry of Health has set up a National Database for Registered Health Practitioners. The Ministry will soon be seeking expressions of interest from all health practitioners who could contribute to the national strategic approach to managing COVID-19. The Board will keep practitioners updated on this initiative.

The Dietitians Board expects practitioners to continue practising professionally, to work cooperatively with colleagues to keep everyone safe, to practise in line with the best available evidence and to recognise and work within the limits of your competence.

Dietitian Prescribers

Pharmacists are under enormous pressure in responding to the requirements of COVID-19 and are needing to protect themselves at the same time as assisting patients in dispensing their medicines. This is a reminder to ensure all prescriptions are **no greater than one month** and then faxed or sent through **NZePS** to the pharmacy desired by the patient.

Take care of your mental as well as physical health

In times like these there can be a lot of anxiety and uncertainty and this is perfectly normal. It's important to take care of your mental as well as physical health. If over the following days and weeks you feel you are not coping, it's important to seek help and professional support - reach out to whomever you feel comfortable. This could be a professional, a friend, a family member, a neighbour or a colleague. To talk to a trained counsellor you can **call or text 1737** – free, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We recognise that the workforce is under both enormous workload and workplace pressure and we all need to work together. Support each other, no matter what role you play as a registered health professional, no matter who you work for or what title you have. While acknowledging our role as a regulator rather than a professional association, we will continue to do everything we can to support you at this time.

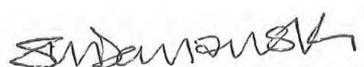
Together we will get through this.

Take Care - Kia Haumaru te noho



Jennifer Pelvin

Chair



Sue Domanski

Registrar