

**Protected Quality Assurance Activities  
under the Health Practitioners Competence  
Assurance Act 2003:**

**Guidelines to Annual Reporting to the  
Minister of Health**

**July 2006**

## 1. What is the purpose of reporting annually on Protected Quality Assurance Activities?

A quality assurance activity is undertaken to improve the practices and competence of health practitioners by assessing the health services provided by them<sup>1</sup>. The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA) allows the Minister of Health to declare quality assurance activities protected.

The Minister can declare a quality assurance activity protected if he/she is satisfied that the activity is in the public interest [section 54 (3)(c) of the HPCAA].

The Minister can revoke protection if:

- the person responsible<sup>2</sup> has failed to comply with the reporting requirement
- the reports (in the previous two years) have, in the Minister's opinion, been unsatisfactory
- the progress of the quality assurance activity has, in the Minister's opinion, been unsatisfactory [section 56 (2) of the HPCAA].

The purpose of reporting is therefore to satisfy the Minister that the protected quality assurance activity (PQAA) continues to be in the public interest and is effective in achieving its goals in terms of:

- the type of activities undertaken
- the information generated from the activities
- the actions and results from the activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from *Protected Quality Assurance Activities under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003*, Ministry of Health 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Each protected quality assurance activity has a 'responsible person' who is appointed by the Minister of Health. This person must meet the criteria set out in section 55(3) of the HPCAA and, once appointed, is responsible for that protected quality assurance activity. All protected quality assurance activities must have an appointed responsible person.

## 2. What are the reporting requirements?

Section 58 of the HPCAA sets out the requirements for what must be reported.

The reports must include the following information:

- any problems or issues concerning the operations of the provider that have been identified in the course of the activity
- any action that has been taken, as a result of the activity, to resolve or address these problems or issues
- any recommendations that have been, or are to be, made to the provider as a result of the activity
- the manner in which the implementation of the recommendations is to be monitored
- the manner in which improvements in the competence or practice of the provider, or any of the agents or employees of the provider, are to be monitored.

Reports must not identify, either expressly or by implication, a particular individual.

Both six monthly and annual reports are required under the HPCAA. The six-monthly reports are internal to the organisation and are not required to be submitted to the Minister of Health. The annual reports are required to be submitted to the Minister of Health.

The date for reporting is determined from when the PQAA Notice becomes active. Notices are active the day after *The Gazette* publishes a notice declaring the organisation's quality assurance activity protected.

Reports are due within two months of the expiry of the reporting period. For example:

<b>Date notice placed in the Gazette:</b>	<b>Date PQAA Notice becomes active:</b>	<b>Six month reporting period ends each year on:</b>	<b>Annual reporting period ends each year on:</b>	<b>Annual report to the Minister of Health due each year on:</b>
5 June 2005	6 June 2005	6 December 6 June	6 June	6 August

## **Six-monthly reporting requirements**

Each person who oversees (i.e. has responsibility for) an activity included in the organisation's PQAA Notice must report to the organisation's appointed 'responsible person' every six months.

Each activity report must provide the information required under section 58 of the HPCAA (as detailed in section 2 of these guidelines).

## **Annual reporting requirements**

The 'responsible person' for a PQAA is required to report to the Minister of Health annually. The annual report is a summary of the information contained in the six-monthly reports and must include the information required under section 58 of the HPCAA (as detailed in section 2 of these guidelines).

All activities included in the PQAA Notice should be reported on. If there is nothing to report on a particular activity, this should be indicated in the report. If recommendations identified in a previous annual report had not been implemented at the time of reporting, the current report should include progress of implementation.

### **3. How will the information be used?**

The Ministry of Health's role, on the Minister's behalf, is to review and evaluate the reports on protected quality assurance activities. The Ministry will assess whether each report provides information that:

- fulfils the reporting requirements set out in the HPCAA
- is sufficient to monitor the implementation of any recommendations or actions identified in the current and/or previous notices
- demonstrates the protected quality assurance activity continues to be in the public interest.

The Ministry will use the reports to assess whether the quality assurance activities should remain protected. On expiry of a protected quality assurance activity notice, if the provider wishes to reapply for protection, the Ministry will also use the reports to provide the Minister with assurance that it is the public interest that the quality assurance activities continue to be protected.