



AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF ANAESTHETISTS
ABN 82 055 042 852

**STATEMENT ON THE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE OF A
SPECIALIST ANAESTHETIST**

In defining the attributes necessary for the high standards of practice in anaesthesia that are expected of a specialist anaesthetist, it is necessary to consider both the anaesthetist and the environment in which he or she works.

1. THE SPECIALIST ANAESTHETIST

- 1.1 Specialist anaesthetists are registered medical practitioners who have completed a period of post-graduate training in Anaesthesia and hold the Diploma of Fellowship of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, or who have been assessed and supported as specialists by the College.
- 1.2 Specialist anaesthetists are required to cultivate and maintain high standards and ethical behaviour in their professional practice of anaesthesia and other branches of medicine. They recognise that the knowledge, skills and attitudes as stated in the College's *Curriculum Modules* and in its Professional Documents form an appropriate model for the practice of their profession.
- 1.3 Specialist anaesthetists recognise that:
 - 1.3.1 Regular work in anaesthesia of appropriate volume and complexity is necessary to maintain clinical skills.
 - 1.3.2 Continuing professional development is essential. This should be managed by participation in the ANZCA Continuing Professional Development Program or equivalent program.
 - 1.3.3 Re-training will be necessary after a period away from normal duties or on taking up a different pattern of practice.
 - 1.3.4 Physical and mental health problems may impact on their ability to maintain high standards of practice and accept that advice and treatment may be necessary to maintain health.

- 1.3.5 Chemical dependence is a health problem of particular relevance to anaesthetists that is likely to adversely affect professional practice.
- 1.3.6 Ageing may lead to a decline in standards of practice and review by appropriately skilled colleagues may be necessary as part of a decision to continue professional practice.

2. THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- 2.1 Clinical anaesthesia is an exacting task. Specialist anaesthetists, and where appropriate their employers, must recognise that high standards of practice require a balance between duties related directly to patient care and those related to maintenance of competence. This will require a balance of time allocation between patient care, education and quality assurance activities. The allocation will vary according to individual circumstances.
- 2.2 To enhance high standards of practice, the job description and professional activities of a specialist anaesthetist must allow time for interaction with colleagues in order to avoid professional isolation. One of the functions of non-patient care time is to allow for maintenance of professional contacts.
- 2.3 Performance of anaesthesia at a high standard requires appropriate rest periods from day to day as well as leave from normal duties for vacation purposes. It is the responsibility of specialist anaesthetists and their employers to ensure that fatigue is not allowed to impair standards of clinical performance.

This Document should be read in conjunction with the following College Professional Documents.

TE6 *Guidelines on the Duties of an Anaesthetist*

TE9 *Guidelines on Quality Assurance*

PS10 *Handover of Responsibility During an Anaesthetic*

PS20 *Recommendations on Responsibilities of the Anaesthetist in the Post-Operative Period*

PS26 *Guidelines on Consent for Anaesthesia or Sedation*

PS42 *Recommendations for Staffing of Departments of Anaesthesia*

PS43 *Statement on Fatigue and the Anaesthetist*

PS49 *Guidelines on the Health of Specialists and Trainees*

PS50 *Recommendations on Practice Re-entry for a Specialist Anaesthetist*

ANZCA Code of Professional Conduct

COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTS

College Professional Documents are progressively being coded as follows:

TE Training and Educational

EX Examinations

PS Professional Standards

T Technical

POLICY – defined as ‘a course of action adopted and pursued by the College’. These are matters coming within the authority and control of the College.

RECOMMENDATIONS – defined as ‘advisable courses of action’.

GUIDELINES – defined as ‘a document offering advice’. These may be clinical (in which case they will eventually be evidence-based), or non-clinical.

STATEMENTS – defined as ‘a communication setting out information’.

This document has been prepared having regard to general circumstances, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to have express regard to the particular circumstances of each case, and the application of this document in each case.

Professional documents are reviewed from time to time, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to ensure that the practitioner has obtained the current version. Professional documents have been prepared having regard to the information available at the time of their preparation, and the practitioner should therefore have regard to any information, research or material which may have been published or become available subsequently.

Whilst the College endeavours to ensure that professional documents are as current as possible at the time of their preparation, it takes no responsibility for matters arising from changed circumstances or information or material which may have become available subsequently.

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