

# NZOHNA Position Statement on Untrained/Technical Support Staff Performing Occupational Health Tasks

## Background

**NZOHNA** are aware there is a rise in health monitoring being provided by non-registered nurses (technicians) in NZ businesses and therefore not members of NZOHNA. They are not affiliated with or regulated by any professional body. Individuals may or may not have had training to the expected standards. There is however no legal or regulatory clarity about this situation.

## Worksafe states in their Exposure Monitoring and Health Monitoring Good Practice Guidelines

*“It should be carried out by suitably qualified, trained and experienced health practitioners with the knowledge, skills, training and experience to carry out the monitoring you need. For example, an Occupational Health Nurse could carry out initial health assessment (health screening) and subsequent routine regular testing. If suspected, workers should be sent to a health practitioner who understands occupational health for a full medical assessment/formal diagnosis and feedback to the PCBU. This could be an Occupational Physician or GP with relevant experience”*

## Regulation/Scope

Scope is the appropriate use of your nursing knowledge and judgment to assess health need, care, intervention, advice and support.

- Nursing Council and the Health and Disability Commission provides regulation and scope for registered nurses and enrolled nurses in Aotearoa NZ and therefore the standards. [https://nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/NCNZ/nursing-section/Standards\\_and\\_guidelines\\_for\\_nurses.aspx?hkey=9fc06ae7-a853-4d10-b5fe-992cd44ba3de](https://nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/NCNZ/nursing-section/Standards_and_guidelines_for_nurses.aspx?hkey=9fc06ae7-a853-4d10-b5fe-992cd44ba3de)
- Nursing Council of New Zealand. (2007). Competencies for registered nurses. [https://nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/NCNZ/nursing-section/Scopes\\_of\\_practice.aspx?hkey=61f53c32-ca6c-4529-aefc-484a0f42f875](https://nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/NCNZ/nursing-section/Scopes_of_practice.aspx?hkey=61f53c32-ca6c-4529-aefc-484a0f42f875)
- NZOHNA Knowledge and Skills Framework
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## **Professional Organisation**

As these technicians do not have a professional body or status, they are not covered by the Health Practitioners Competency Act.

## **NZOHNA Position**

The New Zealand Occupational Health Nurses Association (NZOHNA) believes that Occupational Health and Safety services should be provided by appropriately qualified nurses

Any person providing these services should have the minimum qualification of Registered Nurse with appropriate certification in spirometry, audiometry, etc., with the view to working towards KSF competency or a postgraduate qualification in Occupational Health and Safety.

In addition to this, NZOHNA expects that any person performing diagnostic or health monitoring testing, for example, spirometry, audiology, fit testing, should be trained and certified to do these serviced. The training should be provided by a recognised provider.

If unqualified or underqualified people are providing Occupational Health services, they must do so under the direct supervision of a qualified Occupational Health and Safety Professional (Occupational Health Qualified Professional).

NZOHNA Knowledge and Skills Framework provides a framework for nurses to be assessed against criteria to assess their level of competence.

HASANZ has a register of appropriately qualified people that employers should use to assure themselves that they are employing a peer reviewed and qualified Occupational Health & Safety provider.

NZOHNA therefore supports the practice of only Registered and Enrolled nurses as they have a holistic or total worker health view of the client and workers therefore it does not support the use of non-registered workers providing monitoring except in support and administration roles.