

FAQ on recency of practice

1 December 2016

I'm still working but I don't see patients any more – will I meet the standard?

The definition of practice is broad and includes both clinical practice and non-clinical roles in podiatry. You may not have any direct contact with patients, but if your work relates to podiatry you can meet the recency of practice standard if you have practised at least the minimum number of hours in your chosen scope of practice.

For example, this may include roles in podiatry administration, teaching, or a podiatry policy or research role.

I'm changing jobs, moving from a non-clinical role back to clinical practice - what do I need to do?

If you are significantly changing your scope of practice (for example, moving from a non-clinical role such as an administrative role back to clinical practice) you may be required to undertake some supervised practice, have a professional development plan and a return to practice plan.

Refer to the registration standard and guidelines for recency of practice for more information.

I do a mix of clinical practice and some administration work – will I meet the standard?

It depends on the number of hours you have practised, and the mix of work undertaken. It's your responsibility to make sure you're safe and competent to practise in your intended scope of practice.

The definition of practice is broad and includes both clinical practice and non-clinical roles in podiatry. If you satisfy the requirements for recency of clinical practice you will satisfy the requirements for recency in non-clinical practice.

If your scope of practice is a mix of clinical and non-clinical, in assessing whether you meet the recency of practice standard you need to consider the balance of clinical and non-clinical work, and whether you have practised the required number of hours to remain safe and competent in the clinical aspect of your scope of practice.

If you have not practised the required number of hours to remain safe and competent in the clinical aspect of your scope of practice, you may be required to undertake an assessment or examination to assess your competence to practice or further education or some supervised practice. Refer to the registration standard and guidelines for recency of practice for more information.

I work part time as a podiatrist – will I meet the standard?

To meet the recency of practice standard you must have practised in your scope of practice for a minimum of 450 hours in the previous three years, or 150 hours in the previous 12 months.

For example:

- working one day a week (i.e. 7.6 hours per day) will be sufficient to meet the standard as long as the total hours worked meets the minimum number of hours required in the standard.
- working one day a month (i.e. 7.6 hours per day) will not be sufficient to meet the standard.

What does scope of practice mean?

Scope of practice is the professional role and services that an individual health practitioner is trained, qualified and competent to perform. A podiatrist or podiatric surgeon's scope of practice may include clinical and non-clinical practice. If your scope of practice is in a non-clinical role, you do not need to practise in a clinical role to meet the recency of practice standard.

The Board's code of conduct requires podiatrists and podiatric surgeons to recognise and work within the limits of their competence and scope of practice.

Can I have a year off and still meet the recency of practice standard?

Yes, the recency of practice standard provides for flexibility and enables you to meet the standard over a three year period. You don't need to practise every year provided that you practise at least 450 hours in your scope of practice over the three-year period prior to applying for registration or renewal of registration.

The 450 hours can be at any time during the three years, in one block or multiple blocks. For example, you could practise in year one, have year two off and practise again in year three.

The Board's guidelines for recency of practice include a table with examples of how different practitioners might meet the minimum requirements of the registration standard.

What happens if I don't meet the requirements?

If you don't meet the minimum hours requirement specified in the registration standard, this will not necessarily prevent you from continuing to practise or returning to practice as a podiatrist or podiatric surgeon. The Board will consider your past experience and length of absence from practice, among other considerations, and determine if any additional information, examination, assessment or period of supervised practice is required to ensure that you are safe to practice.

Refer to the registration standard and guidelines for recency of practice for more information about the factors the Board will consider and the information you need to provide.