

Risk of Harm and Risk of Serious Harm

Policy statement If Te Kaunihera Manapou Paramedic Council (Te Kaunihera) receives a notification relating to a paramedic's health, conduct and/or competence, Te Kaunihera must take swift steps to assess the level of risk the paramedic may pose to the public in relation to the concerns raised and to act in accordance with that level of risk.

Procedure The principal purpose of Te Kaunihera under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) is to protect the health and safety of members of the public by providing for mechanisms to ensure that paramedics are competent and fit to practise their profession.

If Te Kaunihera receives a notification relating to a paramedic's health, conduct and/or competence Te Kaunihera can act under the HPCA Act when there are reasonable grounds for believing a paramedic poses a risk of harm or a risk of serious harm to the public by practising below the required standard of competence.

Te Kaunihera has the following thresholds for determining if a paramedic poses a risk of harm, or a risk of serious harm.

Risk of harm

The threshold for risk of harm is met when:

- there is a pattern of practice over a period of time that suggests that practice may not meet the required standards of competence
- a one-off incident has occurred that demonstrates a significant departure from accepted standards of practice
- there is recognised poor performance where local interventions have failed or are not available
- there is professional isolation with declining standards that have been identified.

Risk of serious harm

The threshold for risk of serious harm is met when an individual patient may be seriously harmed by the conduct of the paramedic, or the paramedic may pose a continued threat to more than one patient and as such the harm is collectively considered serious.

In all instances when a risk of harm, or a risk of serious harm is identified, action should be taken by Te Kaunihera.

References [HPCA Act](#)
