

WHY IS MEASUREMENT SO IMPORTANT TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

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The NZ mark of competence
Tohu Matatau Aotearoa

As you and your loved ones go about your day, there are laboratories all over New Zealand making sure that the equipment and instruments responsible for taking vitally important diagnostics are working as they should be.

As Kiwi's, we take for granted that the equipment in our hospitals is fit-for-purpose. We don't worry about whether the tests and treatment we receive will be accurate. We must assume it is, otherwise we'd definitely be hearing about it in the media and we'd think twice about ever going to the A & E.

What most New Zealanders don't know, is that there are IANZ accredited laboratories going on site to hospitals on a regular basis to ensure that their equipment and instruments are tested and calibrated correctly, that they remain fit-for-purpose, and provide reliable results.

It's important that the laboratories are IANZ accredited, because it means that their people, equipment, processes and procedures have been rigorously assessed against the international standard. When equipment can mean the difference between life and death, it's reassuring to know that the people tasked with checking them, are working to the highest standard.

In a hospital environment, even the air is critical to someone's care and recovery. On-site testing ensures that the Hepa filters, pressure differentials, particle counting and air barriers are as they should be to ensure that the operating theatres, clean rooms, biological safety cabinets and more are providing the required levels of protection for you and your family.

In New Zealand, IANZ partners with 52 accredited calibration laboratories and 14 accredited applied physics testing laboratories. These laboratories in turn, support a wide range of healthcare, food production, and other manufacturing businesses – as well as many service sectors. This can range from equipment used to accurately measure sample sizes, thermometers, pressure gauges and over pressure relief valves to equipment testing electrical resistance that protect cables and instruments from giving electrical shocks.

As a frequent flyer, I'm particularly grateful for the testing of the torque driver used to tighten the bolts on an aircraft. It's good to know that Air New Zealand take such care to make sure the wings, wheels and engines are attached properly and safely!

Manufacturers also rely on IANZ accreditation endorsed test reports to take their export products to market. These reports remove the barriers to trade by showing that a product meets the international standard required for that particular destination and doesn't have to be re-tested when it arrives. Globally, New Zealand is seen as a responsible producer of quality produce and IANZ helps protect that reputation by ensuring that the perception matches the reality.

The pinnacle provider of reliable measurement in New Zealand is our National Metrology Institute – the Callaghan Innovation Measurement Standards Laboratory of New Zealand (MSL). MSL provide industry with competent calibrations that are traceable (to SI units in most instances); they are also independently assessed by IANZ to demonstrate that they operate a technically competent service following a globally acceptable management system.

As you can see, there is an awful lot happening behind the scenes to make sure New Zealand testing laboratories are as good as or better than any on the planet: that is the least we can do to for you and your family.

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