

“Absolute confidence and peace of mind – that’s what accreditation gives me”



The NZ mark of competence  
Tohu Matatau Aotearoa

IANZ Accreditation Assessor, René Davidse, shares her recent experience of being a medical imaging client.

A qualified and practising Medical Imaging Technologist (MIT) before she joined IANZ, René Davidse had an understanding of how IANZ is protecting the health and wealth of New Zealand through accreditation. However, it wasn't until her recent CT scan, that she truly appreciated the 'absolute confidence and peace of mind' accreditation gives people needing medical imaging.

“From the moment my specialist referred me for a CT scan at an accredited medical imaging provider, to the moment I got my result, the confidence I have in the accreditation process gave me peace of mind throughout,” says René. “I knew the staff at this medical imaging service were trained and competent, that their equipment was safe and reliable, and that they had the processes and policies in place to ensure that I would receive an accurate result. Knowing this, gave me comfort throughout the whole process, from beginning to end.”

Like most Kiwis, René had been for an X-ray before and felt the anxiety that comes with having any medical procedure, but that was before she became an IANZ Assessor in the medical team. “Knowing the rigor of the accreditation process and what we at IANZ check for, takes away that anxiety,” says René.

So how can the rest of us feel the same? Well let's take a closer look at what happens during the IANZ assessment process. René referred to the 'New Zealand Code of Radiology Management Practice', which is one of the standards medical imaging services are assessed against for accreditation.

What you'll see, is a long list of management and technical requirements that a medical imaging provider has to demonstrate competence in to achieve IANZ accreditation. During an accreditation assessment, a medical imaging provider has to demonstrate that what they say they are doing, usually via their documentation, is what they are actually doing in practice. If they are able to demonstrate this, they can be granted accreditation, which means they have met the New Zealand standard.

The management requirements are significant, ranging from their management system, document control and external services and supplies to preventative actions, continual improvement, and quality and technical records. In short, all the things they need to do to ensure a safe and well run practice. The technical requirements cover everything from personnel, radiology equipment and environmental conditions to pre-examination, examination, and post-examination procedures. Assessors also look at the reporting of examinations – which, as René Davidse commented earlier, gives you 'peace of mind' from start to finish.

"When the practice rang me on the day of my appointment to say there was a problem, a fault with their scanner that they were remedying and this would delay my scan by a half an hour, I wasn't worried," says René. "I knew that this was the service actioning their policy and that they had contingencies in place. I knew that they would be running QC (quality control) tests and that equipment would not be used until it was fixed and working perfectly." René received a call back within fifteen minutes and was told she could come in immediately, which not only saved her a long spell in the waiting room but potentially an unnecessary journey if the equipment could not be fixed that day.

There are 55 accredited medical imaging practices in New Zealand, some within DHBs and others in private practice. Almost all medical imaging providers seek accreditation, because it means they can expand their practice to treat clients with ACC claims, for which some examinations require mandated accreditation.

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One of René's IANZ clients told her that he sees IANZ accreditation as an insurance policy. He welcomes the process as it puts his mind at ease and provides positive and constructive feedback as well as identifying possible risks early. Policies, procedures and processes are implemented to ensure that the service is appropriately organised to meet the needs of patients and clinicians, and the organisational arrangements and responsibilities are clearly defined with robust risk mitigation in place.

René encourages her IANZ clients to embrace quality in a consistent manner, which will translate into accreditation and, more importantly, excellence in service delivery.



**René Davidse, Accreditation Assessor, Healthcare Programmes**