



Helping practices navigate Foundation Standards with confidence

7 May 2026

Indicator 15.1 Requirements under the Children's Act 2014

The Children's Act 2024 strengthens the safety of children in New Zealand and ensures health providers adopt child protection policies and procedures. The Act also ensures the workforce have the core competencies to recognise and act for a child who may be vulnerable to abuse.

Why this matter

General practice is a key point of contact for children and families. It is important that practices have the core competencies to recognise and act for a child who may be vulnerable to abuse. A quality safety checking process at recruitment, and regularly thereafter, supports a child centred safe practice. Meeting these legislative requirements is a requirement for RNZCGP Foundation Standards.

Key Information

A full Child Protection policy includes training on potential signs of child abuse or neglect, how to respond effectively if recognised, and the legal frameworks to support your organisation in addressing any concerns of abuse. The practice also needs to complete a full Safety Check process for all people working in the practice.

Policy requirements:

Check your current policy meets the requirements listed in [15.1 Children's Act 2014 |](#) . You can check your policy meets the key elements required here [RNZCGP Developing a policy and/or procedure | RNZCGP](#)

Training options:

There are several training options available online. Training can be conducted in-house as per RNZCGP guidelines, see [Sample training template for Foundation Standard | RNZCGP](#) . The in-house trainer needs to provide certification of their own training. Please note: some online learning platforms specify their course is for individual use only.

Safety check requirements: All new staff need to have a full Safety Check completed prior to starting. All existing staff (including practice owners if they are also core workers) need to have a Safety check completed every three years. A full Safety Check includes:

- ID verification.
- Police check (or Criminal Check for non-core workers who are declined a Police Check).
- Professional membership/APC (Core workers only).
- Risk assessment.
- For all new staff - add in Employer References, Employment verification and Applicant interview.

The risk assessment is often missed by practices. A Police check on its own, does not meet the requirements of a Safety Check. A risk assessment considers whether the (potential) team member poses a risk/no risk to the safety of children by evaluating all the information provided. A practice needs to record this risk assessment for each person. Some practices use a spreadsheet that includes a risk assessment, others use an individual page for each worker which is dated and signed.

Top Tip

Review your Safeguarding Children's Policy, checking you have completed verifiable training for all workers and have a process that documents the Safety Checks, including Risk assessment, for all new and existing workers as per RNZCGP guidelines [15.1 Children's Act 2014 | RNZCGP](#)

Need help? Want to give Feedback/Suggestions for future top tips?

Please email alison.wilden@wellsouth.org.nz or contact your practice partner.

NEXT ISSUE How to get the best from your Smartsheet