

Kia Ora,

I am getting in touch regarding advocacy undertaken by the IEDP committee on behalf of our members with the NZ Psychologists Board. We have managed to reconfirm that Psychologists registered in the Educational Scope are able to provide diagnosis, specifically, when they are competent to do so and the situation merits it.

At the end of last year, the IEDP was contacted by a member and informed that they had received advice from the Board that educational psychologists were not able to provide diagnosis. IEDP clarified that this advice had been provided by the Board Psychology Advisor. We then developed our own understanding of this by re-reading the Scopes documentation, speaking with a range of Educational Psychologists, including those who helped to develop the scopes when they were implemented and meeting with the Board to share our thinking and answer the questions of board members. Below I have pasted a summary of what was shared with the Board on behalf of our members at the February Board meeting.

*It is the clear position of the IEDP that psychologists registered in the education scope are competent to provide diagnosis, when it is beneficial to the individual concerned and when the individual educational psychologist is competent to provide that specific diagnosis.*

*There are decades of precedence of educational psychologists providing diagnosis. Registered educational psychologists we have spoken to who were practicing when the scopes were implemented believe that educational psychologists can diagnose and have done so throughout their careers as required. Educational psychologists in private practice frequently diagnose and have done so since scopes have been in place. One of the authors of the scope said that there was never any intention when the scopes were written to prevent educational psychologists from providing diagnosis. The previous psychologist board advisor gave specific advice to a range of educational psychologists that they were competent to diagnose. The recollections of individuals are that based on this advice it would be unethical to collect data and then not to diagnose.*

The NZ Psychologists Board Registrar, Kylie Hooper has provided the following statement from the Board which clarifies the situation and supports the IEDPs understanding that Psychologists registered in the education scope are

competent to provide diagnosis, when it is beneficial to the individual concerned and when the individual educational psychologist is competent to provide that specific diagnosis.

*The Board is satisfied, given the information provided by yourself on behalf of IEDP, that there has been a misunderstanding in terms of training of educational psychologists in diagnoses, and there has not been a training gap for educational psychologists in that regard. The Board therefore agrees that there is no need for the scope to change in order for educational psychologists to continue practising in line with the current scope and their individual competence.*

Please note that this is not an endorsement of any individual educational psychologist's actions as competence must be maintained for all actions undertaken by each psychologist individually. We as a committee encourage our members to engage in their individual CCP program, work closely with a supervisor and participate in professional development as it is relevant. Of course, we encourage you to maintain professional links by belonging to the NZPsS and the IEDP.

Nga Mihi,

Robyn Stead

IEDP Chairperson