



## **Working as an orthoptist in New Zealand**

New Zealand has no training facility for orthoptists. Currently all Orthoptists working in New Zealand have been trained overseas.

Orthoptists can work for a District Health Board (DHB) in a hospital or outpatient clinic. This is government funded health care. Some orthoptists work in private ophthalmology practices.

Job vacancies are almost always advertised on the New Zealand Orthoptic Society (NZOSI) website <http://www.nzosi.com> and on the website for the DHB involved. Sometimes advertisements can also be found on the International Orthoptic Association (IOA) or British and Irish Orthoptic society (BIOS) websites.

To be able to work in New Zealand it is preferred that you have an internationally recognised qualification from an IOA member or associate member country. We encourage all orthoptists in New Zealand to join the NZOSI and actively participate in our annual symposium as well as the monthly online journal club. Some employers may have it as a requirement that you join the New Zealand Orthoptic society. At the moment there is no national registration for orthoptists.

Orthoptic duties in NZ depend on the requirements of the role. Many orthoptists in NZ will do 'traditional' orthoptics: working with paediatric ophthalmologists, managing amblyopia, motility and strabismus clinics. Some employers prefer an orthoptist who is also capable of ophthalmic technician skills such as visual field testing, OCT's etc. Other employers specifically recruit an orthoptist to do ophthalmic technical work.

Salary varies across NZ (there is no national pay scale) depending on duties and employer.

If you're thinking of coming to New Zealand to work for a few years, or maybe even to settle, you'll need a work or resident visa. Currently, Orthoptics as a profession is not recognised on the 'skills shortages' list therefore you may require evidence from your employer to prove that you are essential.

It is perfectly acceptable and legal to apply for jobs before you get a visa. Employers generally understand the situation, and when you get a job, will help you with your visa application. Just remember however you won't be able to start working, and earning, until your visa is approved.

More information can be found on the following websites:

[www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz)

[www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/work-in-nz](http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/work-in-nz)

[www.workingin-newzealand.com](http://www.workingin-newzealand.com)