

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland
N.B. Unofficial translation. Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish

No. 564/1994

Health Care Professionals Decree

Issued in Naantali on 28 June 1994

Section 1 (1338/2007) Protected occupational titles of health care professionals

The protected occupational titles of professionals referred to in section 2 (1) 2 of the Health Care Professionals Act (559/1994) include orthopaedic technician, chiroprapist, trained masseur, chiropractor, naprapath, osteopath, practical nurse for social and health care, psychotherapist, hospital physicist, hospital geneticist, hospital chemist, hospital microbiologist, and hospital cell biologist.

Section 2 (1120/2010) Professional training entitling to use the occupational title of trained masseur

The requirement for using the protected occupational title of trained masseur is that the person has passed the competence-based qualification test referred to in the Act on Vocational Adult Education (631/1998).

Section 2 a (1120/2010) Professional training entitling to use the occupational title of psychotherapist

The requirement for using the protected occupational title of physiotherapist is that the person has completed the psychotherapist training organised by a university or by a university together with some other training organisation. The university organising the training must possess responsibility for providing education in psychology or medicine. The university admits the students to the physiotherapist training.

The competence required for practising as a physiotherapist is acquired by studies of at least 60 credits consisting of the study modules of theoretic studies, psychotherapeutic work with patients under job supervision, personal psychotherapy and a final project. The competence is proved by a competence-based test.

The requirement for taking up the occupational title is work experience of at least two years in mental health services or corresponding service and that the person has before the psychotherapist training:

- 1) taken an applicable higher university degree or an applicable degree in social and health studies in a university of applied sciences; the training must include or one must have completed, in addition to it, a total of 30 credits of studies in psychology or psychiatry;

- 2) completed post-secondary nurse education and, in addition to it, specialisation in psychiatry, if the diploma has not required studies in psychiatry; or
- 3) completed other training abroad corresponding to the training required in subparagraphs 1 and 2.

The university will give the students a certificate of completing the training, The certificate contains information on when the studies were commenced and on their extent, the study modules and the competence test.

Section 2 b (1120/2010) Professional training entitling to use the occupational title of certain other professionals with a protected title

The professional training of chiropractor, naprapath, osteopath, hospital physicist, hospital geneticist, hospital chemist, hospital microbiologist or hospital cell biologist refers to training of at least four consecutive years approved by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health.

Section 3 (377/2011) Pursuit of activities of a licensed physician by a medical student

A medical student who has completed at least the studies pertaining to the first five years of study as referred to in the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004), and who has, on the basis of the studies completed, sufficient qualifications for attending to the tasks concerned, may on a temporary basis pursue the activities of a physician, emergency service included, under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician, in a health care unit referred to in section 2 (4) of the Act on the Status and Rights of Patients (785/1992) or in a social welfare unit referred to in section 24 of the Social Welfare Act (710/1982).

A medical student who has completed at least the studies pertaining to the first four years of study as referred to in the Decree mentioned in paragraph 1, and those courses in the specialty in basic medical training in which he or she intends to work, and who has, on the basis of the studies completed, sufficient qualifications for attending to the tasks concerned, may pursue the activities of a physician under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician in a specialised medical care unit or health centre ward. A further requirement for working as a physician on duty is that he or she works directly under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician.

Section 3 a (377/2011) Pursuit of activities of a licensed dentist by a dental student

A dental student who has completed at least the studies pertaining to the first four years of study as referred to in the Government Decree on University Degrees, and who has, on the basis of the studies completed, sufficient qualifications for attending to the tasks concerned, may on a temporary basis pursue the activities of a dentist under the direction and supervision of a licensed dentist, in a unit referred to in section 3 (1).

Section 3 b (377/2011) Pursuit of activities of a licensed professional by a person studying medicine or dentistry abroad

A person studying medicine or dentistry abroad shall have the right referred to in section 3 or 3 a when he or she has completed at least the studies pertaining to the first five years of the study of the medical or dental training in question and in the situations referred to in section 3 (2) at least the first four years of study or, as regards dental training, at least the first four years of study and any other studies and practical training prescribed by the Supervisory National Authority for Welfare and Health.

Section 3 c (104/2008) *Pursuit of activities of a licensed professional by a person studying to be a head dispenser or pharmacist*

A person studying to be a head dispenser or pharmacist in Finland or a person studying abroad for a similar profession who has completed the general and subject studies prescribed by the university and who has, on the basis of the studies completed, sufficient qualifications for attending to the tasks concerned, may while taking part in practical training constituting part of the studies or, after completing the first period of the practical training, temporarily pursue the activities of a pharmacist or head dispenser in a pharmacy, hospital pharmacy or a dispensary under the direction and supervision of a licensed pharmacist or head dispenser.

Section 3 d (104/2008) *Pursuit of activities of a licensed professional by other students*

The activities of a licensed professional other than that referred to in sections 3 and 3 a–3 c may, on a temporary basis, be pursued in a unit referred to in section 3 (1), under the direction and supervision of a licensed professional, by a person studying for the profession in question in Finland or for similar profession abroad, who has completed two thirds of his or her studies and who has sufficient qualifications for attending to the tasks concerned on the basis of his or her practical experience and other circumstances.

Section 3 e (104/2008) *Limitation of the pursuit of activities of a licensed professional*

Students referred to in sections 3 and 3 a–3d shall not have the right to pursue temporarily the activities of a licensed professional after ten years have passed from the start of their studies.

Section 3 f (377/2011) *Supervisor of a student pursuing the activities of a licensed professional*

The health care or social care unit must assign in writing a supervisor for a student referred to in sections 3 and 3 a–3 d who is entitled to practice the profession independently as a licensed professional and who has adequate practical experience. The supervisor working in the unit must monitor, guide and supervise the student's activities and without delay intervene in any shortcomings in them and discontinue the activity if patient safety is jeopardised. The unit must see to it that a student on emergency duty always has access to a licensed professional entitled to practise the profession independently who must, if necessary, personally come to the unit.

Section 4 (377/2011) *Conditions for practising as licensed professional in particular cases*

A citizen of the European Union (EU state) or the European Economic Area (EEA state), who has completed the training referred to in section 11(1)–(3) of the Health Care Professionals Act in a state not belonging to the European Economic Area must have completed any such service, additional training and passed any such examination to demonstrate professional skills as may be prescribed separately by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, to make his or her qualifications equivalent to those obtained on the basis of similar training in Finland, in order to obtain a right to practise a profession referred to in the said sections of the Act.

A person who has completed the training referred to in paragraph 1 may upon application for particular reasons obtain a licence from the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health for temporarily attending to the tasks of a licensed professional in a public health care unit before he or she has acceptably completed the additional studies and passed the examination referred to in paragraph 1 in their entirety. The licence may be obtained for a maximum of two years and on the conditions determined by the National Supervisory Authority.

Section 5 (377/2011) *Specific training in general medical practice*

Persons that are admitted to specific training in general medical practice must have taken the degree of Licentiate in Medicine in Finland or an equivalent degree abroad that is required for practising as a physician.

The aim of specific training in general medical practice is to acquaint the physician with the tasks of a physician working in primary health care, with health care administration and the social security system, as well as with cooperation with the personnel employed in health care and social care. In order to complete the training the physician must:

- 1) serve as a physician at a health centre approved by a university granting degrees in the field of medicine (*educational unit*) for a minimum of nine months in an employment relationship to the municipality or joint municipal board;
- 2) serve as a physician at a hospital approved by the educational unit for a minimum of six months;
- 3) participate on a regular basis in the on-the-job training provided by the units referred to in subparagraphs 1 and 2; and
- 4) complete a course approved or organised by the educational unit of a minimum of 16 hours that acquaints the physician with health care administration and the social security system.

The specific training in general medical practice takes three years to complete on a full-time basis. Part of the training can be completed on a part-time basis if the total time of the training does not decrease, if the objectives of training are achieved and if the part-time service per week is at least 50 per cent of the fulltime service.

A maximum of six months of the service in the specific training in general medical practice can be completed at a health care institution or unit oriented on general medical practice tasks other than the unit referred to in paragraph 2 (1) or (2) and approved by the educational unit as referred to in paragraph 4 (1) of the Health Care Professionals Act. As the training can also be approved a maximum of one year of the

practical training included in the education for the degree of Licentiate in Medicine, if the practical training has taken place at a hospital or health centre approved by the educational unit.

The educational unit gives a certificate of completion of the physician's specific training in general medical practice.

Section 6 (377/2011)

Section 6 was repealed by Decree No. 377/2011.

Section 7 (377/2011) *Conditions for practising as a licensed professional with specialist qualifications in particular cases*

In order to be entitled to practise as licensed professional with specialist qualifications, a citizen of EU state or EEA state who has completed the training required for specialist qualifications as referred to in section 14 of the Health Care Professionals Act in an EU state or EEA state other than Finland or in a non-EEA state must have completed any such additional training and passed any such examination to demonstrate professional skill as may be prescribed separately by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, to make his or her qualifications equivalent to the specialist qualifications obtainable in Finland.

Section 8 *Medical and dental specialties*

A medical specialist may practise in Finland in a specialty corresponding to the degree programme referred to in the Decree concerning the Degree of Medical Specialist (678/1998). (824/1999)

A dental specialist may practise in Finland in a specialty corresponding to the degree programme referred to in the Decree concerning the Degree of Dental Specialist (629/1984).

Section 9 (1338/2007)

Section 9 was repealed by Decree 1338/2007.

Section 10 (377/2011) *Adaptation period*

In the conditional decision on recognition of professional qualifications that it gives the applicant the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health prescribes the length of the adaptation period and the work tasks performing which the adaptation period can be completed. Furthermore, the National Supervisory Authority assigns a supervisor for the applicant for the period of adaptation and determines the qualifications required of the supervisor. The supervisor must have work experience of at least five years.

The conditions determined by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health must be complied with during the adaptation period. The applicant must work in a health care unit referred to in section 2 (4) of the Act on the Status and Rights of

Patients or in a social care unit providing institutional care as referred to in section 24 of the Social Welfare Act so that the applicant is engaged directly in the service of the person maintaining the unit. The applicant must find a job for the adaptation period him/herself. The adaptation period may also include further training.

Section 11 (377/2011) Responsibilities of the supervisor assigned for the adaptation period

The supervisor assigned for the adaptation period shall monitor, guide and supervise the applicant's work during the adaptation period and without delay intervene in any shortcomings in it. If patient safety may be jeopardised during the adaptation period the supervisor shall without delay notify the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, which can order that the adaptation period be discontinued.

After the adaptation period the supervisor shall deliver his or her opinion on the applicant's competence and skills to practise the profession to the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health. The opinion shall be delivered even if the applicant discontinued the adaptation period or if it was discontinued. .

Section 12 (377/2011) Qualification test

The primary content of the qualification test and the examiner will be prescribed by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health.

Section 13 (1338/2007) Prior notification of temporary and occasional supply of services

A certificate stating that the person concerned is lawfully practising his or her profession in the EU or EEA state in which he or she is established, and a diploma, certificate or other evidence of formal qualifications required for practice of the said profession shall be appended to the written prior notification to be made in accordance with section 9 of the Health Care Professionals Act. The applicant shall also present a certificate that he or she has not even temporarily been denied licence to practise the profession. The nature of temporary or occasional services provided, the point of time and place of their provision, and the nationality of the person concerned shall be stated in the notification. An account of taking out the insurance policy referred to in section 4 of the Patient Injuries Act must be included in the notification.

Section 14 (377/2011) Qualifications and language skills required of citizens of a non-EEA state

A citizen of a non-EEA state who has completed the training referred to in section 4 or 5 (1) of the Health Care Professionals Act abroad must, in order to obtain a licence to carry on the occupations referred to in the said provisions or a right to practise as a licensed professional, have completed any such service and additional studies and passed any such examination to demonstrate professional skills as may be prescribed by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health to make his or her qualifications equivalent to those obtained after corresponding training in Finland, and must have provided evidence of adequate language skills. In assessing a person's

language skills, the skills necessary for carrying out the tasks required for the licence or right to practise the profession in question must be considered adequate.

A person who has completed the training referred to in paragraph 1 may upon application for particular reasons obtain a licence from the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health for temporarily attending to the tasks concerned of a licensed professional in a public health care unit before he or she has passed the examination referred to in paragraph 1 in its entirety. The licence may be obtained for a maximum of two years and on the conditions determined by the National Supervisory Authority.

A person who has completed the training referred to in paragraph 1 who participates in Finland as trainer in health care research or teaching and who in conjunction with the research or teaching takes part in the care of patients, may upon application for particular reasons obtain a licence from the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health to practise as health care professional to a limited extent and on a temporary basis. The licence can be granted for a maximum of two years at one time on the conditions determined by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health by place of operation and speciality. A condition for granting the licence is that the applicant has in his or her home country an unlimited right to practise the profession. A further condition for granting the licence is assignment of a person responsible for the applicant who is entitled to practise the profession in question as a licensed professional and has adequate practical experience. The person responsible must be appointed for each unit where the applicant takes part in the care of patients. The person responsible must monitor, supervise and, as necessary, guide the activities of the person who has been granted licence to practise as health care professional.

Section 15 (1338/2007) *Right of Nordic nationals to practise as health care professionals in Finland*

Provisions on the right of Nordic nationals to practise as health care professionals in Finland are laid down in section 3 of the Health Care Professionals Act. In virtue of the agreement (Treaty Series 2/1994) referred to in section 3 of the Act the applicant can be granted the right to use in Finland the health care professional's occupational title provided for in the agreement.

Section 16 *Practice of opticianry*

A licensed optician may not prescribe spectacles independently to:

- 1) a child under the age of eight years;
- 2) a person who has previously undergone an operation involving the eyeball;
- 3) a person suffering from an obvious eye disorder; or
- 4) a person whose vision cannot be normalised with spectacles.

Within the limitations of paragraph 1, contact lenses may be prescribed and fitted by a licensed optician who has completed the additional training required. A licensed optician must also ensure that there is nothing that would prevent the use of contact lenses.

The provisions of paragraph 2 concerning contact lenses shall also apply to other optical devices comparable to spectacles and intended to improve the sight of individuals with poor vision.

Section 17 *Practice as a dental technician*

A licensed dental technician may undertake tasks of dental technician given to him or her by a dentist as well as technical repairs to removable denture.

A specialised dental technician is a person who has practised as a licensed dental technician for five years and completed the training required for the specialist qualifications in question.

A specialised dental technician may prepare and fit independently removable full dentures for users. However, a specialised dental technician may not independently prepare or fit a denture

- 1) to a person with trauma from operation or accident that significantly changes the structure of the mouth;
- 2) to a person suffering from an oral disease or a development disorder in the oral area; or
- 3) to the roots or artificial roots of the teeth.

Section 18 *Composition of the Advisory Board*

The Government shall appoint no more than 12 members and a personal deputy for each of them to the Advisory Board referred to in section 41 of the Health Care Professionals Act. The Government shall appoint the chairman and the deputy chairman from among the members. The members shall represent health care and educational authorities, faculties of medicine and dentistry and other universities and educational institutions responsible for the training of health care professionals.

If a member or deputy member resigns or dies in the middle of term, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health shall appoint a new member or deputy member for the remainder of the term.

The Advisory Board may appoint subcommittees to prepare matters and must define their tasks.

The Advisory Board shall hear professional organisations and employers of health care professionals, and other experts.

Section 19 *Tasks of the Advisory Board*

In addition to what is prescribed in section 41 of the Health Care Professionals Act, the tasks of the Advisory Board shall include:

- 1) monitoring and co-ordination of the organisation, content and development of the training of health care professionals;
- 2) assessment of the needs for training of health care professionals and issuance of related suggestions and statements;

- 3) issuance of suggestions and statements concerning revision of the training of health care professionals; and
- 4) monitoring of co-operation between health care professionals and co-operation between authorities and preparation of proposals for improvement of such co-operation.

Section 20 Implementation

This Decree enters into force on 1 July 1994.

The provision of section 5 of this Decree concerning specific training in general practice shall however apply from 1 January 1995.

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Decree may be taken before its entry into force.

Entry into force of Amended Acts:

1338/2007

This Decree enters into force on 1 January 2008.

The assistant nurse, dental hygienist, chiropodist, physiotherapy assistant, children's nurse, hospital and ambulance attendant, practical mental nurse, psychiatric nurse and practical nurse for social and health care with a protected occupational title under the provisions in force at the entry into force of this Decree are further considered as the health care professionals referred to in the Health Care Professionals Act and are entitled to use their occupational title.

At the entry into force of this Decree the occupational title of trained chiropractor is changed into chiropractor, the occupational title of trained naprapath into naprapath and the occupational title of trained osteopath into osteopath.

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Decree may be taken before its entry into force.

412/2010

This Decree enters into force on 1 September 2010. The Decree is applied to those who obtain the right to take part in the specific training in general practice or practical training on 1 September or thereafter.

412/2010

This Decree enters into force on 31 December 2011.

An application for the protected occupational title of psychotherapist on the basis of training commenced before the entry into force of this Decree shall be submitted to the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health on 30 June 2017 at the latest.

377/2011

This Decree enters into force on 1 May 2010.

Section 6, as it read at the entry into force of this Decree, is applied to the dentists whose degree of Licentiate in Dentistry has not included a period of additional practical training of six months.

The requirement for an employment relationship with the municipality or joint municipal board referred to in section 5 (2)(1) of this Decree is not applied to the physicians who obtained the right to take part in the specific training in general medical practice referred to in the Decree on specific training in general medical practice (1435/1993) before 1 September 2010.

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Decree may be taken before its entry into force.