Foundation

Questions about Foundation?
Email: quality@rnzcgp.org.nz

FOUNDATION STANDARD 11.6 – RESIDUAL CURRENT DEVICES (RCDS)

FAQs about Body Protected Areas (BPAs)

1 What if my practice requires multiple BPAs or major building work?

If your practice requires multiple BPAs, or significant electrical work such as rewiring, you should obtain advice from a registered electrician or registered electrical inspector and develop a documented transition plan. The plan should outline the work required, time frames, risk mitigation measures, budget considerations, and how progress will be monitored. Practices should prioritise higher risk areas and make demonstrable progress towards compliance.

2 How long can a practice remain on a transition plan?

Practices should be able to demonstrate that they understand the requirements, have obtained advice from a registered electrician or registered electrical inspector, have planned for implementation, are actively managing risks, and are progressing towards compliance. The plan should be reviewed at least every 6–12 months, and updated sooner if risks, time frames, costs, tenancy arrangements, or electrical advice change.

3 What if I lease my premises?

Practices operating from leased premises remain responsible for managing patient safety risks and working towards compliance. If building modifications are required, practices should engage with the building owner as early as possible and document discussions, decisions, agreed actions, and time frames. Any barriers outside the practice's control should be recorded within the transition plan.

4 What evidence should we keep while transitioning to a BPA?

Practices should retain evidence showing that electrical risks have been assessed and are being actively managed. This may include:

- electrical reports or advice from a registered electrician or electrical inspector
- risk assessments
- the documented transition plan
- hazard and risk register entries
- clinical governance meeting minutes
- records of six-monthly RCD testing
- quotes, work orders, or evidence of planned electrical upgrades
- updates recorded in quality improvement or strategic planning processes, where relevant.

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Te Whare Tohu Rata o Aotearoa

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5 Who can advise whether my practice is electrically compliant?

Practices should seek advice from a registered electrician regarding electrical installations and upgrades. A registered electrical inspector can provide advice on inspection requirements and compliance with electrical safety standards. Where there is uncertainty about regulatory requirements or interpretation of electrical safety legislation, practices may seek guidance from Energy Safety, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

6 What if different electricians give different advice?

If you receive conflicting advice, ask each electrician to explain how their recommendations align with AS/NZS 3003 and the Electricity (Safety) Regulations. You may wish to seek a second opinion from a registered electrical inspector, particularly where significant costs or building modifications are involved. If uncertainty remains regarding regulatory requirements, consider seeking clarification from Energy Safety.

7 What if our practice is unable to complete the work immediately because of cost, landlord approval, or building constraints?

Practices should document the barriers preventing immediate compliance and include these in their transition plan. The practice should obtain professional electrical advice, implement appropriate risk mitigation measures, and demonstrate active progress towards compliance. Progress should be reviewed at every 6–12 months through the practice's governance processes, and updated sooner if risks, timeframes, costs, tenancy arrangements, or electrical advice change.