Dear Mrs Arangie,

Highlights in this issue:

- The Do’s and Don’ts for Professional Stationery
- Sharing rooms with persons not registered with the HPCSA
- Locum know-how
- Honouring our Health Idols
- Doctors in drive to support Mandela Day
- CPD Update

CHAIRPERSON’S WELCOME NOTE

On behalf of all the Board members, I would like to wish all our practitioners the best for 2012.

It has however been a sad start to the year with the death of prominent Dermatologist, Dr John Moche. On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to Dr Moche's family, friends and colleagues. We have faith in the authorities and are keeping an eye on their investigation to bring these criminals to book.

YOUR PROFESSIONAL BOARD IS HERE TO SERVE YOU

You may think you know all about the Health Professions Council of South Africa and the Board, but as with any vast and complex organisation, we have a myriad of different branches that are all there to serve you - the practitioner - in performing your duties.

Below is a brief summary of just how your Board functions so that you can stay registered as one of the top health professionals in South Africa.

ENJOYING A GLASS TOO MANY EVERY NIGHT TO ESCAPE THE EVERYDAY STRESSORS?

Long working hours, societal and family expectations, fear of failure, dysfunctional relationships and increasing debt are the perfect recipe for “clutching out” every now and then. Add to that a pre-existing or new medical and mental problem and you have a perfect recipe for a disaster.
PROFESSIONS REGISTERED UNDER THE BOARD

Medical
* Medical Practitioners
* Clinical Associates
* Anesthetist's Assistants (register closed for new registrations)
* Health Assistants (register closed for new registrations)

Dental
* Dentists

Medical Science
* Genetic Counselors
* Medical Physicists
* Medical Biological Scientists
* Biomedical Engineers (register closed for new registrations)
* Clinical Biochemists (register closed for new registrations)

THE DO'S AND DONT'S FOR PROFESSIONAL STATIONERY

Before you sign off the final proof you have received from the printers for new stationery, remember that certain information is a pre-requisite.

Please ensure your stationery includes the following on your letterheads, account forms as well as electronic stationery:

INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS REMAINS A CONCERN

Although South African practitioners rank amongst the best in the world, the Board is concerned about the increase in the number of inappropriate relationship complaints which has been lodged with the Council.

In 2009/2010, 28 cases of sexual misconduct were lodged. This reflects a sharp increase, as only two complaints were lodged in 2006/2007 while five complaints were lodged in 2007/2008. Between 2005 and 2010, 22 practitioners were found guilty of sexual misconduct or harassment.

PROVIDING INFORMATION WITHIN PRACTICES

After receiving complaints from the public that practitioners are not clearly identified at multiple practices and hospitals, the Board would like to remind practitioners that the following information must be clearly displayed within your practice:

- Name
- Qualification
- HPCSA registration number

Details of locums working at a specific practice must also be visible to the public and your prescription pad should also reflect the owner of the practice and the substitute practitioner.

Please also ensure there is clear identification of practitioners in practices where there are multiple practitioners.

INTERNS NOT ALLOWED TO LOCUM - A FINAL WARNING

Despite numerous requests to practitioners not to employ interns at unaccredited facilities, this practice continues.

This serves as a stern and final warning to practitioners to stop this practice immediately.

Interns are legally restricted to practising under supervision in facilities accredited by the Board for the purpose of internship training.

The employment of interns in any clinical practice outside accredited facilities is illegal and could lead to disciplinary action against the intern as well as the medical practitioner who employs an intern as a locum, or in any other manner at unaccredited facilities.
WHEN CAN I EMPLOY A LOCUM?

Often the Board receives enquiries about the employment of locums at various practices and institutions.

A practitioner may employ a professional assistant or locum tenes for no longer than six months. Only a person:

- Who is registered with the HPCSA in the category Independent Practice
- Whose name currently appears on the Register
- Who is not suspended from practising his or her profession may be employed.

Please also note that Medical Practitioners registered under the category Public Service are not allowed to do locums in public or private health institutions.

TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF INTERN MEDICAL SCIENTISTS

There are three active Medical Scientist Registers: Medical Biological Scientists (MS), Medical Physicists (PH), and Genetic Counsellors (GC). Medical Biological Scientists may register in one, or at the most two discipline(s) among the following: Anatomical Pathology, Cell Biology, Clinical Biochemistry, Genetics, Haematology, Immunology, Microbiology, Molecular Biology, Pharmacology, Physiology, Radiation Biology, Reproductive Biology or Virology.

ANNUAL FEES REMINDER

A friendly reminder that Annual Fees are due before 1 April 2012. Please note that we do not accept cash on our premises. For your convenience, you have three easy payment options to choose from:

1. Direct or Internet Banking
2. Debit order - Kindly complete the debit order form and send back to us
3. Credit card - Kindly complete the Credit card authorisation form

HPCSA APPLAUDS ARREST OF BOGUS DOCTOR

Media Release, 24 August 2011

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) praised the Johannesburg Metro Police for the arrest of a bogus doctor in Johannesburg earlier this week.

The penis enlargement “doctor” was impersonating a medical doctor and illegal practice advertisements were placed in public areas. This arrest comes after an illegal health clinic was closed by the SAPS two weeks ago.

WARNINGS ON UNETHICAL TELEMEDICINE PRACTICE

Media release 6 June 2011

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) wishes to reiterate its 5 May press release, in which it condemns any act of unethical telemedicine that is in breach of its ethical rules and regulations.

ACCOUNTS FOR TREATMENT OF DEPENDANTS

Being registered as a health practitioner under the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No.56 of 1974), confers certain rights and privileges. Corresponding with these rights and privileges are the ethical duties a health practitioner owes to individuals and society.
HONOURING OUR HEALTH IDOLS

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) takes great pleasure in honouring the outstanding and extraordinary achievements of healthcare professionals through the Department of Health’s annual Health Recognition Awards.

Read more

HPCSA REMOVES INTERNS FROM HOSPITAL

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) had removed four Interns from the Boitumelo Hospital in Kroonstad, following a recent evaluation by the Regulator regarding the internship training conducted at the Hospital.

Read more

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plays a crucial role in assisting healthcare practitioners acquire new and updated levels of knowledge, skills and ethical attitudes that will not only add measurable benefits to the professional practice, but also enhance and promote professional integrity to the ultimate benefit of the patient.

Read more

ETHICS - A KEY COMPONENT TO CPD

Healthcare is a constantly advancing field and with these advances, conflicts often arise within the complex arenas of politics, law, religion, philosophy and economics. Findings by the Council attribute a high number of legal cases against practitioners to the lack of knowledge with regard to their ethical behaviour and conduct.

Read more

ATTACK ON HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS UNACCEPTABLE

Media release 8 June 2011

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is horrified at the news that a medical practitioner was stabbed to death by one of his patients.

Read more

HPCSA OUTRAGED AFTER PATIENT RAPE IN HOSPITAL

Media release 26 October 2011

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is appalled after learning about the rape of a terminally ill patient in Bloemfontein earlier this month.

Read more

DOCTORS IN DRIVE TO SUPPORT MANDELA DAY

Media release 17 July 2011

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is joining millions around the world in wishing the father of our nation, Nelson Mandela, a Happy Birthday.

Read more
NEW COUNCIL INAUGURATED

The new President and Vice-President of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) were elected on 3 February 2011 at the first meeting of the newly constituted Council. Prof Sam Mokgokong was elected as President, while Prof Tholene Sodi, who is the Chairperson of the Professional Board for Psychology was elected as Vice-President for a five year term.

URGENT REQUEST TO UPDATE CONTACT DETAILS

As we embrace technology (and sometimes the challenges that go with it) we would like to request practitioners to ensure Council has their correct contact details.

"In a service orientated industry, the HPCSA is trying to improve communicating more effectively, frequently and efficiently with its members. We are therefore urgently requesting all practitioners to ensure their contact details are correct on the HPCSA database", Dr Kgosi Letlape, Acting CEO and Registrar said.

WHY SHOULD I REGISTER WITH THE HPCSA?

Practitioners who practice any of the health professions falling within the ambit of the HPCSA are obliged to register with Council.

SHARING OF ROOMS WITH PERSONS NOT REGISTERED WITH THE HPCSA

While it may be economically viable to share rooms with other practitioners, there are certain rules that should be considered.

Rule 8A of the Ethical Rules of Conduct for Practitioners Registered promulgated by the Minister of Health under the Health Professions Act, 1974 in the heading "Sharing of Rooms" stipulated that a practitioner shall not share his or her rooms with a person or entity not registered in terms of the Act.

ANNUAL FEES PAYABLE BY INTERNS IN MEDICINE

The Health Professions Council of South Africa intends, in terms of section 61 A (1) (e) of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), and after consultation with the Professional Boards, to make the rules relating to payment of fees to Council.

The Medical and Dental Professions Board in September 2011 approved an annual fee of R500.00 by interns in medicine be implemented with effect from April 2012.

This fee was approved, taking into account the expenses incurred by the Subcommittee for Internship. Further consideration was given to the business of the Board and HPCSA pertaining to internship training which constitutes a huge workload in terms of registration, meetings, and evaluations.

The only income for the Board pertaining to interns in medicine is the cost-recovery basis utilised for Intern logbooks.

INVESTIGATION FOLLOWING REGISTRATION IRREGULARITIES AT HPCSA

Pretoria - The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is today revealing registration irregularities within the Council after a foreign qualified Neurosurgeon, who has never met the requirements for registration, was registered with the Council.

VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR FOREIGN QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS

Looking at the 185 000 practitioners on the HPCSA's Registers, fraudulent registration are a rare exception, however, the Council have strengthened its verification processes and quality assurance following the fraudulent registration of a foreign qualified practitioner as a Neurosurgeon.
ROOM STAFFING OVER HOLIDAYS AND EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Practitioners have an ethical and moral responsibility to their patients to ensure that during their absence due to holidays or any other reason, arrangements are made with a nearby practitioner to consult with their patients. Particularly, where a patient is in treatment, the patient should be informed that another practitioner has been made aware of the patient's treatment and the other practitioner's contact details be provided to the patient.

In rural areas it is suggested that practitioners could appoint a locum at their practice in their absence. Another solution would be to inform patients in advance of their absence and to refer them to the provincial or local public health facility. In the event that proper arrangements are not made, a practitioner may be held liable, should a complaint is laid with Council.

SUSPENSION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Practitioners who practice any of the health professions falling within the ambit of the HPCSA are obliged to register, pay their annual fees with Council and attend to CPD activities.

In terms of Section 19A (1) of the Health Professions Act, (Act No. 56 of 1974) a relevant Professional board or a Committee of a Professional Board to whom the function has been delegated may authorize the registrar to suspend the registration of any person -

a. who has failed to notify the Registrar of his or her present address, within a period of three months from the date of any inquiry sent by the registrar by certified mail, which is returned unclaimed, to the address appearing on the register in respect of such person;
b. Who has failed to pay his or her prescribed annual fee on a date when it became due in terms of section 61A.
c. Who has failed to comply with the requirements in respect continuing professional development as prescribed under section 26.

DO YOU WANT TO PRACTISE AGAIN?

1. Call our Client Contact Centre on 012 338 9301 or email us for your restoration fee including penalties if applicable;
2. Complete Form 18 - Restoration downloadable from our website;
3. Fax proof of payment and Form 18 to 012 338 5120 - Attention Registrations Department;

Kindly note that a healthcare professional may be restored in the category Supervised Practice for a period of six months. The supervisor must submit a report to the Chairperson of the Education Committee as to the competency of the health professional or whether a further period of supervised practice is recommended. Upon submission of a successful report from the supervisor, you may be restored to the category where you were registered before. Practitioners has to accrue CEUs and will be included in the CPD audit after a year.

MedicDent News is a newsletter for practitioners registered with the Medical and Dental Professions Board
It is produced by the Public Relations and Service Delivery department, HPCSA building, 2nd floor, 553 Vermeulen street, Arcadia, Pretoria.
Practitioners are encouraged to forward their contributions to Sipho Mbele at siphom@hpcsa.co.za
Change of contact details
Email: records@hpcsa.co.za

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