

Media Statement

BOGUS PRACTITIONERS NABBED IN KURUMAN AND JOHANNESBURG

25 May 2023

For immediate release

Pretoria – The Health Professions Council of South Africa’s (HPCSA) nationwide crackdown on healthcare practitioners who are operating illegally is gaining momentum as its Inspectorate Office continues to make arrests in different parts of the country.

The HPCSA’s Inspectorate Office, in a joint operation with members of the South African Police Service (SAPS), conducted an inspection in Kuruman, Northern Cape, where Mr Tshifata Katembwe (a Congolese national), was found practising as a medical practitioner whilst not registered with Council. During the inspection, it was discovered that he has been working at the medical practice registered to Dr TK Gopane since January 2022.

Mr Katembwe was arrested for practising illegally and as a result he was in contravention of Section 17(1) of the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974 and detained at the Kuruman SAPS. He appeared at the Kuruman Magistrate Court on Wednesday, 24 May 2023, however, the case was postponed for today, Thursday, 25 May 2023. Dr Gopane is registered with Council as a medical practitioner and will be reported to the Medical and Dental Professions Board for appointing an unregistered person and thereby putting the health of unsuspecting members of the public at risk.

In another incident, the HPCSA Inspectorate Office arrested a bogus practitioner who impersonated a registered practitioner and used her registration credentials to practise illegally. In April 2023, Dr Lesne Pucjlowski alerted the HPCSA that an unknown person used her details, including her name, identity number and registration number to secure a job in Cape Town. Upon discovering the fraud, the recruitment agency that facilitated the employment dismissed him and notified Dr Pucjlowski of the fraud.

The HPCSA's Inspectorate Office in collaboration with a Johannesburg based recruitment agency and the SAPS made a breakthrough to arrest the suspect, after they lured him to an interview for another job placement, he applied for using Dr Pucjowski's information.

Detectives from Douglasdale Police Station arrested the man who arrived for the interview. Under interrogation, Mr Simba Koromani, a Zimbabwean citizen who had no valid passport, conceded that he was an impostor. A Curriculum Vitae (CV) and a fake identity document, with his picture, but bearing Dr Pucjowski's details were found in his possession.

Mr Koromani was arrested and detained at Douglasdale SAPS for fraud and contravention of Section 17 and Section 40 of the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974. He is to appear in court tomorrow.

The HPCSA is mandated to protect the public and guide the professions through enforcement and compliance from the practitioners in line with the provisions of the Health Professions Act. Members of the community are encouraged to continue reporting all suspected illegal practices by unregistered persons. Registered practitioners are encouraged to be careful and extra vigilant with their personal information and to report all suspected illegal practices by unregistered persons.

Members of the public can verify a practitioner's status by calling the HPCSA Call Centre on 012 338 9300/1.

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About the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) also known as Council is a statutory body established under the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974. The HPCSA is committed to protecting the public and guiding the professions. The mission of the HPCSA is quality and equitable healthcare for all.

The HPCSA is mandated to regulate the health professions in the country in aspects pertaining to education, training and registration, professional conduct and ethical behaviour, ensuring Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and fostering compliance with healthcare standards.

In order to safeguard the public and guide the professions, registration in terms of the Act is a prerequisite for practicing any of the health professions registrable with Council.

Protecting the public and guiding the professions

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