

PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR EMERGENCY CARE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Q: I want to become an emergency care provider, what are available options to study in this field?

A: *The following qualifications obtainable from any accredited Higher Education Institution will enable you to register with the HPCSA once completed*

- *One-year Higher Certificate in Emergency Medical Care leads to registration as an Emergency Care Assistant (ECA)*
- *Two years (now offered for 3 years) Diploma in Emergency Medical Care – leads to registration as Paramedic*
- *4 years Bachelor of Health Sciences Degree leads to a registration as an Emergency Care Practitioner (ECP)*

Q: Who offers such training?

A: *There are Higher Education Institutions accredited by the Board, both public and private Higher Education Institutions to offer training in the field of emergency care. A list of accredited institutions is obtainable from the HPCSA website under the professional board for emergency care or you may contact emergencycare@hpcsa.co.za for further details*

Q: I have an NQF 5 certificate in Emergency Medical Care and wish to migrate to the Diploma NQF 6 in Emergency Medical Care, what should I do?

A: *Contact one of the accredited Higher Education Institutions about any bridging course available*

Q: What are the requirements to register a private ambulance service and what equipment are required for the ambulance?

A: *The Board does not register private ambulance services. This is done by the Board of Health Care Funders (BHF) in Rosebank. The National Department of Health is responsible for regulating the licensing of ambulances and emergency response vehicles. The Board only regulates registered individuals working on the ambulance*

Q: What are the requirements to offer levels 1, 2 and 3 First Aid training?

A: *First Aid training falls within the ambit of the Health and Welfare Seta (HWSeta), you may also contact the Department of Labour and the QCTO to find out more about the first responder options.*

Q: With the phasing out of the BAA, AEA, OECO and Paramedic (CCA) training what will happen to those persons who are on these registers?

A: *People already in the HPCSA register will retain their registration and keep their membership active by paying annual fees. Registration in different categories will require approved education and training programmes.*

2. REGISTRATION AND RESTORATION

Q: I qualified as an emergency care provider abroad and need to register with the HPCSA, what are the requirements?

A: *You have to complete the application form (form 315) for registration and submit documentation specified in the form as well as documentation specified in (form 348). Forms obtainable from the HPCSA website. All documentation to be submitted to the Board with proof of payment of an administrative fee (not registration fee), Board secretariat will place your application on the agenda for consideration by the Education Committee in its next meeting.*

N.B. *Applications for registrations (foreign qualified) that fall within the regulations promulgated by the Minister of Health in 2017 i.e Reg 40577 government gazette 27 January 2017 will not be considered if the qualification was obtained after the date specified in the gazette i.e within 12 months of promulgation of the regulation and that date has since lapsed.*

Q: I qualified more than 2 years ago and have never been registered what are the requirements for registration?

A: *The restoration guidelines/rules applies in this regard, the restoration guidelines are available on the HPCSA website under the professional Board for emergency care, you may also email emergencycare@hpcsa.co.za to obtain an electronic copy of the restoration guidelines After successful completion of the relevant requirements in the restoration guidelines, you are also required to submit a duly completed application form for registration (form 23 EMB) and submit it to the HPCSA together with the documents specified in the form, with the relevant registration fee and pro rata annual fee.*

Q: My name has been removed from the register for more than 2 years ago, but I have worked abroad as an emergency care practitioner. Which institutions are accredited to conduct the assessments for restoration of my name?

A: *The restoration guidelines/rules applies in this regard, the restoration guidelines are available on the HPCSA website under the professional Board for emergency care, you may also email emergencycare@hpcsa.co.za to obtain an electronic copy of the restoration guidelines assessments are conducted by the Higher Education Institutions (university) accredited by the board. Board secretariat will advise on accredited institutions in this regard.*

Q: What are the requirements for restoration of my name? My name was removed from the register for more than 1 year

A: *Two years and more since removal from relevant register – HPCSA approved refresher course with an examination at a Board approved institution (University/Higher Education Institutions). The examination may include a set of Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), a written theoretical examination as well as a paediatric and adult patient simulation and will be moderated by a PBEC-appointed moderator. Examinations may be attempted twice. Additional attempts will not be permissible. After successful completion of the relevant requirement in the restoration guidelines, you will also required to submit a duly completed application form for restoration (Form 18) and submit it to the HPCSA together with the documents specified in the form and fees payable*

Q: I am registered as an Operational Emergency Care Orderly (OECO) and wish to change my registration category to AEA?

A: *In March 2019 the Board resolved to migrate all OECO categories to the ANA register.*

3. CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES/PROTOCOLS

- Q: What is the board's position on two BAAs in an ambulance and supervised practice**
A: *There is a board ruling in this regard published on the HPCSA website under the professional board for emergency care, or contact emergencycare@hpcsa.co.za to obtain a copy.*
- Q: Have the Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) been officially adopted by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) Professional Board for Emergency Care (PBEC)?**
A: *Yes, the CPGs have formally been adopted by the PBEC*
- Q: May registered persons practice the skills that were previously not on their related scopes of practice?**
A: *Registered persons are encouraged to undergo CPG CPD activities related to these medications. However, until approval by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) approval, these may not be used in clinical practice yet. Registered persons will be notified when approval has been obtained. The finally approved SAHPRA list may appear different to the current list.*
- Q: What is an accredited CPG CPD activity?**
A: *These are CPD activities offered by accredited service providers or service providers where the specific activities related to the CPGs have been assessed and accredited.*
- Q: How does one differentiate between practitioners who have successfully completed an accredited CPG update course and those who have not? From the perspective of a medical scheme; there is no way to determine whether a practitioner is practicing out of scope when administering certain medications.**
A: *In line with the general rules and ethics related to registered healthcare professionals, all persons may only practice clinical skills and interventions for which they have been adequately trained and assessed. Like with many scope of practice changes (like as in the case of the addition of morphine sulphate to the paramedic scope of practice, Rapid Sequence Intubation for Emergency Care Practitioners and others), by virtue of annual registration and CPD compliance, the onus is on the registered person to ensure their compliance. This also speaks to the need for system specific clinical governance established within ambulance services (both public and private) to monitor compliance. Professional Board for Emergency Care monitoring (with subsequent Board "licensure" and record-keeping) for individual medications for individually registered persons is an impractical, unsustainable and is seen contrary to good practice regulation of "professional practice". Where skills and medications are felt to be performed or administered inappropriately, persons are welcome to report such instances of such to the Health Professions Council of South Africa for investigation. Finally, it must be noted - until final approval from the South African Health Product Regulatory Authority has been obtained, no additional medications should currently be used/administered.*
- Q: Is it within the scope of practice of a person registered as an "Ambulance Emergency Assistant" to act as a phlebotomist in a pathology/medical technology practice?**
A: *This skill falls outside of the scope of practice of an Ambulance Emergency Assistant. Ambulance Emergency Assistants perform intravenous cannulation, administer intravenous fluids and drugs within their scope of practice only in cases of emergencies where patients require such fluids and drugs.*
- Q: Will the CPGs and related scopes of practice change in future?**
A: *Yes, this is the first guide of its kind in the South African emergency care context, and updates and amendments will follow.*
- Q: Is a more definitive, prescriptive guide to clinical practice being developed?**
A: *Yes, by using the existing CPGs, a more regimented guide to clinical practice is currently being explored. This will be particularly relevant to common conditions and scenarios.*

Q: May I transfer a patient on medications or on equipment/devices that are not within my scope of practice?

A: *Permission and consultation with the transferring healthcare provider must be sought. Where additional interventions (commencement) or alterations of in-situ medications and equipment/devices (which are not in the scope of practice) are likely, this transfer should be undertaken by a registered Emergency Care Provider with a relevant skill set. Where no considerable alterations/amendments to the medications or equipment/devices are necessary, this transfer may be undertaken (this is strictly applicable to an interfacility transfer context). Registered persons undertaking these transfers must be prepared to act in the case of acute deterioration.*

Q: May my employer instruct me to practice outside of my scope of practice?

A: *No, this is not permitted. You must practice within your relevant scope of practice, as you as an individual is registered with the HPCSA, not your employer*

Q: Will I be allowed to continue with training and education of the CPG content and related material beyond 31 December 2018?

A: *Absolutely, this is an expectation and is absolutely encouraged.*

Q: Why do I have to undergo CPG CPD related activities for skills or medications that I may already be familiar with or have previously used?

A: *It is possible that at the time of the offering of your specific qualification, this teaching/training of that skill/medication may not have formed part of that curriculum/course (subsequently added to the scope of practice without additional training). Therefore, to ensure patient safety, these skills/medications require CPG CPD related activities. In addition, the context of the skill and medication that previously was on the scope of practice may have changed.*

Q: Who may apply to offer CPD activities related to the CPGs?

A: *Any individual, service provider or accredited service provider may apply to offer CPG CPD activities via an Accreditor.*

Q: Is it possible to upskill a lower qualified practitioner through an official OSCE or learning platform to perform a skill that would not normally be in their scope but which they could then perform under supervision of someone who has that skill set.?

A: *Up-skilling of individual persons by other registered emergency care persons is not permitted, unless this is done within a Board recognised education/training programme. Practitioners wishing to move to a different scope of practice (which includes the performance of skills and administration of medications) must be registered in the respective professional registration category allowing for such skills and medications. No person may perform professional acts outside of their respective professional registration categories.*