



Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics

NEWS

Newsletter of the Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics





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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

I have served as a member of the Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB) for the last 10 years, and in that time had the opportunity to serve in almost all the committees of the Board, giving me a truly rounded experience in the regulatory space. I represented the Board in various forums such as the Department of Health Human Resources Planning, Board of Healthcare Funders Conference and International Network of Physical Therapy Regulatory Authorities (INPTRA). I have served as Chairperson of Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics for the past five years and these years were both challenging and fulfilling. Being the leader of three diverse professions that have overlapping scopes of practice presented potentially explosive interactions, but through rigorous discussions we were able to find one another and work as a team. I am grateful to have worked with the wonderful and hard-working, selfless Board members who dedicated their time without complaint, and this made my task easier. From time to time there were difficult discussions to ensure that we guide the professions and protect the public in the ever-challenging healthcare arena.

I have had insightful interactions with healthcare practitioners across the country during the practitioner roadshows. These have provided healthcare practitioners with the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the activities of the Board, as well as resolve registration issues raised.

It was a great privilege to be invited to the Biokinetics conference where I presented on ethics. I also attended the Biokinetics Annual General Meeting, where I shared updates on the activities of the Board, and also had to navigate thorny questions about Board activities. I was able to give appropriate guidance as I have participated in the Accreditation of the universities that train Biokineticists, and I have also served in the committee that accredits Biokinetics practices. These were valuable experiences that have afforded me a deeper understanding of the profession.

Another privilege was to have an opportunity to interact with the Podiatry Association of South Africa (PASA) when I was invited to attend their executive meeting, during which I had an opportunity to share updates



on the functioning of the Board. The profession had an outstanding matter that the Board needed to resolve, unfortunately this matter has not been fully achieved due to bureaucratic processes beyond the control of the Board. To have a rounded experience of the profession, I visited the University of Johannesburg which is the only institution that trains Podiatry in South Africa. This exposure afforded me an in-depth understanding of the profession making it easier for me to give guidance.

The South African Society of Physiotherapy (SASP), has invited me on a number of occasions, to present the perspectives of the Board at the Private Practitioners' seminars. I was also invited to attend their Annual General Meeting to give updates on the activities of the Board.

Exposure to all the professions of the Board, has given me the advantage to be able to understand their similarities, differences and areas of co-operation. I would urge the incoming Board to continue with such interactions as these enable the Board to give appropriate guidance taking into consideration the current practices.

My e-mail box in the last five years has been inundated with complaints from practitioners, who were unhappy with registration issues, practice matters, as well as seeking guidance. Some of these matters and issues, the Board could solve in a short space of time, but some are more complicated, like the claw backs by the medical aids. This particular issue remains important, and the incoming Board will continue to deal with it.

Internationally I had a unique privilege of representing the Board at (INPTRA) conferences and subsequently nominated to serve as a member of the Membership Committee. This gives South Africa a voice in the

international front and enables us to contribute to the international discourse.

As I step down from the regulatory space looking back I think we have achieved a few things, and the revision of the scopes of practice and minimum standard for each profession is an important one.

I wish to thank and acknowledge the Vice Chairperson of the Board for the support and working behind scenes to support my work.

The work of the Board could not have taken place without the hard work of the Secretariat. I salute them for their dedication particularly during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, as we navigate our meetings on virtual platforms.

To the Community representative members of the Board, thank you for the contribution you made to the



profession through your lens.

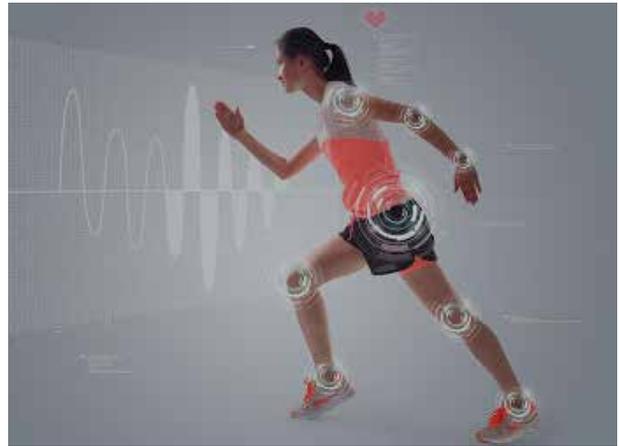
To the outgoing Board members, I appreciate your inputs that have shaped the work of the Board, and I trust that your wisdom will continue to shine in the minds of those left to continue the work of the Board and guide their work going forward. Best wishes with your future endeavours.

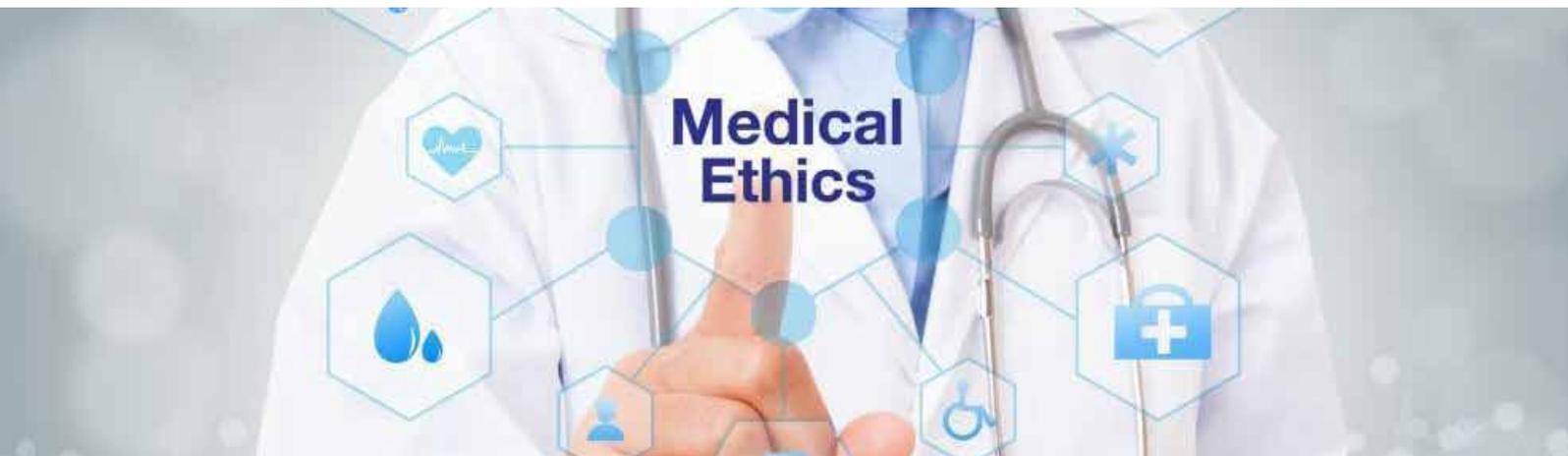
To the incoming Board, I wish you well as you are going to be functioning in an uncharted environment due to the national pandemic that has altered health care.

Thank you all.

Ms Zola Dantile

**Chairperson of the Professional Board for
Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics**



Medical Ethics

A brief review of the principles of Medical Ethics

Ms Nonzamo Duma

Board Member – Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics

Member of the Committee of Preliminary Inquiry of the PPB Board

Medical ethics is a system of moral principles that apply values and judgements to the practice of medicine and healthcare as a whole.

The values that commonly apply to medical ethics in South Africa, amongst others include:

Autonomy: the patient has the right to refuse or choose their treatment.

Beneficence: a practitioner should act in the best interest of the patient.

Non-maleficence: “first, do no harm”.

Justice: concerns the distribution of scarce health resources, and the decision of who gets what treatment.

Dignity: the patient (and the person treating the patient) has the right to dignity.

Truthfulness and honesty: Honesty is defined as the quality of being honest. Honesty brings out the traits of truthfulness and worthiness of being depended on, whereas truthfulness can be described as a quality of being truthful. It is described by characteristics such as expressing or telling the truth. The concept of informed consent has increased in importance since major preliminary cases that played a major role in the healthcare industry.

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is the governing statutory body established in terms of

the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974, mandated to set out the medical ethics of South Africa, to which each and every healthcare practitioner registered with it, must adhere to.

The HPCSA presents ethical guidelines to guide and direct the practice of healthcare practitioners and protecting the public. These guidelines form an integral part of the standards of professional conduct against which a complaint of professional misconduct will be evaluated.

The HPCSA, together with the twelve Professional Boards that operate under its jurisdiction, is committed to:

- Promoting the health of South African population;
- Setting and maintaining fair standards of professional practice; and
- Determining standards of professional education and training.

Ignorance to such guidelines may /can never be used as an excuse in preliminary cases, thus it is each and every healthcare professional's duty and in their interest to familiarise themselves with such guidelines.

Further information can be found at:

Health Professions Act 1974 (Act 56 of 1974) <https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Legislation>

<https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Conduct/Ethics>

https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/editor/UserFiles/downloads/committees/Policy_on_Business_Practices_final%20-%202016.pdf

https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Uploads/editor/UserFiles/downloads/conduct_ethics/rules/generic_ethical_rules/generic_ethical_rules.pdf



Message from Chairperson of Biokinetics Internship Committee

As I look back on my term of office as the Chairperson of the Biokinetics Internship Committee (BKIN) 2015-2020, the famous quote of Stephen Breyer the American Judge, comes to mind "Open-mindedness is not blank mindedness, open-mindedness is being prepared to change your view when presented with a better set of proofs and arguments." As a committee, we were constantly challenged to improve the steps and procedures we followed to evaluate and approve Biokinetics practices that seek approval from the HPCSA to supervise interns. Eventually, I hope that with the newly developed Terms of Reference, Standard

Operating Procedures and the updated application forms used to apply and accredit a Biokinetics practice (Forms 206A-206E). The necessary changes were made to streamline the whole process. Hence, Stephen Breyer's quote is quite applicable to me as the Chairperson because I had to be open-minded and was fortunate to be guided and supported by my Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB) colleagues with a "better set of proof and arguments."

Thanks, Committee and PPB colleagues.

Prof Jeanne Grace



HPCSA complaint process

How does the HPCSA deal with a complaint against a healthcare practitioner?

Ms Lorraine Jacobs - Member of the Preliminary Committee of Inquiry

A brief summary of how a complaint against a healthcare practitioner is dealt with by the Health Professions Council:

When a complaint against a healthcare practitioner is lodged with the HPCSA it is reviewed by the Registrar. Depending on the significance and the seriousness of the complaint the Registrar may:

Refer it to the Ombudsman for mediation, or he/she may refer the matter to the Preliminary Committee of Inquiry. This committee, established by the Professional Board, decides on the appropriate manner of dealing with such a complaint. If the committee decide that the respondent acted unprofessionally, but the conduct in question is found to constitute only a minor transgression, it will impose a suitable penalty such as a fine. If however the

committee is of the opinion that there are grounds for a professional conduct inquiry into the conduct of the respondent, it must direct that an inquiry be held by the Professional Conduct Committee, specifically established by the Professional Board to conduct this inquiry. If there is evidence of fraudulent behaviour they may recommend a criminal investigation.

If the Professional Conduct Committee finds that there is poor performance on the part of the respondent, it may, in addition to imposing a penalty where the evidence also points to unprofessional conduct, impose practice restrictions and refer the matter, with its findings on poor performance on the part of the respondent, to a Performance Assessment Committee, to inquire into the performance of the respondent and make a determination on the appropriate management thereof.

Further information on the process can be accessed at:

https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Content/Docs/regulation_gnr102_2009.pdf





REFLECTION ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING (2016-2020)

Dr Marianne Unger - Chair of the Education, Training and Registrations Committee, Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB)

The Education, Training and Registrations Committee (ETRC) of the Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB) is one of the Board's largest committees. The ETRC is primarily tasked with ensuring that our higher education institutions (HEIs) graduate forward thinking, reflective professionals responsive to the healthcare needs of our South African communities. To this end, it is therefore the ETRC's responsibility to define our Scope of Profession and determine the minimum standards of education and training. It is also the responsibility of this committee to facilitate applications for registration of foreign qualified healthcare practitioners as well as those wishing to return to active practice after a sabbatical or returning from working abroad. Ensuring compliance for maintenance of registration also falls within the mandate of this committee.

Five years have passed and upon reflection it is with pride that I can report on several achievements during our term of office as the ETRC. It has not always been smooth sailing, but several strategic changes within the HPCSA are beginning to show effect and enabling our functioning.

Five years ago, we committed to renewing the scope documents for all of our three professions and along with that updating the minimum standards of training (MST). Our goal was to formulate our scope of the professions that allows for advancements within our professions. The world is changing and pandemics such as COVID-19 have made it very clear that our future practice is not guaranteed or certain in any way. In the same way we renewed graduate exit level and practice thresholds to reflect the professional competencies we believe will ensure and strengthen our future positioning in SA healthcare. The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) have approved our revised drafts of these important documents and we are now awaiting promulgation. The MST have also been approved and came into effect in November 2019.

For Biokinetics the impact of these revised documents has been significant. The ETRC is hoping to encourage all institutions offering a Biokinetics programme to move towards a four-year professional degree to not only align with Physiotherapy and Podiatry, but more importantly to ensure that graduates comply with the Board's expected exit level outcomes. Closer collaboration with colleagues registered with the Board are considered fundamental in



helping our professions reach their objectives.

We can further report that the following was achieved:

- Review of the standard operating procedures for foreign qualified practitioner registration applications
- Drafted the Scope of Profession (SOP) for the Physiotherapy Technician and provided training and an opportunity for current Physiotherapy Assistants to be promoted to Technician level
- Updated the terms of reference and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the approval of practices for Biokinetic Internships intake.
- Provided all training institutions with guidelines for managing academic challenges due to COVID-19 (ongoing)

- Successful annual engagements with all our Education and Training stakeholders and engaged with several registered practitioners at five roadshows
- The ETRC has advised the professions regarding qualifications for considering Advanced Scope of Profession
- Although prescription rights have featured on many meeting agendas over the last 10 years, Podiatry has made significant advances for obtaining limited prescription rights. Physiotherapy has also applied to the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA).

We wish the new Board and the ETRC well and believe they will continue guiding and moving our professions forward!





THE HPCSA INSPECTORATE OFFICE

Ms Erin Dayaram Member of the Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB)

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), established the Inspectorate Office in 2015 as a Law Enforcement and Compliance Unit to ensure compliance with the Health Professions Act (Act 56 of 1974), rules and regulations. The Office currently has four regional offices, in Pretoria, Durban, Cape Town, and East London. Their primary focus and roles are to ensure that registered healthcare practitioners comply with the provisions of the Health Professions Act, 1974 as well as all rules and regulations governing their professions. By ensuring this they are fulfilling the mandate of protecting the public

The Inspectorate Office is structured to assist the Professional Boards with complaints and compliance of healthcare practitioners registered with the HPCSA, however they also investigate and action the law against practitioners or an illegal practice offering the services

of any profession registered with HPCSA. Inspections of premises can be conducted, ensuring compliance of fines imposed by Professional Conduct Committee and collection of fees from unregistered practitioners are just some of the functions of this Office.

In keeping with their mandate of protecting the public, they encourage stakeholder engagement and creating awareness through campaigns that educate the patient/public. Members of the public are able to lay a complaint with the Office in their own capacity. The process can be lengthy (1-8 months), but a thorough investigation will be done. This allows fair treatment of all parties involved and allows for transparency after a complaint is made.

This Office has and will, presently and in the future, play an important role for all professions as they not only guide the healthcare practitioner but protect the profession and in doing so allow for better standards of healthcare for the public.



WHERE TO FIND THE INSPECTORATE OFFICES:

National Office in Pretoria – Senior Manager and one Secretary (012 338 03984)

REGIONAL OFFICES:

- Gauteng (Pretoria) – This office also deals with matters for Limpopo and
- Mpumalanga (Contact: 012 338 3984).
- Cape Town - This office also deals with matters for
- Northern Cape (Contact: 021 830 5921)
- Durban - Contacts: (031 830 5294)
- East London - This office also deals with matters for Free State and North West (Contacts: 043 783 9741)



SICK NOTES PHYSIO

CAN A PHYSIOTHERAPIST ISSUE A SICK NOTE OR CERTIFICATE OF ILLNESS?

Dr Desmond Mathye (PhD Physio) Chairperson of PRELIM

Issuing of a sick note or certificate of illness is regulated by Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997 ("BCEA") and Ethical Rules of Conduct for Practitioners Registered Under the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974, Government Notice No. R. 717 of 4 August 2006 as amended by

Government Notice No. R68 of 2 February 2009 ("Rules"). Section 23 (2) of BCEA provides that...medical certificate must be issued and signed by a medical practitioner or any other person who is certified to diagnose and treat patients and who is registered with a Professional Council established by an Act of Parliament.

Validity of a sick note or certificate of illness in terms of BCEA depends on the requirement of Section 23(2) wherein the person issuing the document should be a

medical practitioner or any other person who is certified to diagnose and treat patients and registered with a Professional Council established by an Act of Parliament. Annexure 9 of Government Notice No. R. 717 of 4 August 2006 as amended by Government Notice No. R68 of 2 February 2009 provides that in his or her performance of the professional acts, a physiotherapist – (a) Shall confine himself or herself to clinical diagnoses and practising in the field of physiotherapy in which he or she was educated and trained and in which he or she has gained experience, regard being had to both the extent and the limits of his or her professional expertise. (b) Shall not fail to communicate and cooperate, where appropriate with medical practitioners in the diagnosis and treatment of a patient (c) Shall refer a patient to a practitioner when the patients' problems and needs are beyond the scope of physiotherapy. Based on Annexure 9, physiotherapists are certified to diagnose and treat patients in addition to being registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa in terms of the Health Professions Act of 1974, which is an Act of Parliament. The other requirements for a valid sick note or certificate of illness are in terms of Rule 16 which provide that,

(1) A practitioner shall only grant a certificate of illness if such certificate contains the following information –(a) the name, address and qualification of the practitioner (b) the name of the patient (c) the employment number of the patient (if applicable) (d) the date and time of the examination (e) whether the certificate is being issued as a result of personal observations by the practitioner during an examination, or as the result of information received from the patient and which is based on acceptable medical grounds (f) a description of the illness, disorder or malady in layman's terminology, with the informed consent of the patient; provided that if the patient is not prepared to give such consent, the medical practitioner or dentist shall merely specify that, in his or her opinion based on an examination of the patient, the patient is unfit to work (g) whether the patient is totally indisposed for duty or whether the patient is able to perform less strenuous duties in the work situation (h) the exact period of recommended a sick leave (i) the date of issuing of the certificate of illness; and (j) the initial and surname in block letters and the registration number of the practitioner who issued the certificate.

(2) A certificate of illness referred to in sub-rule (1) shall

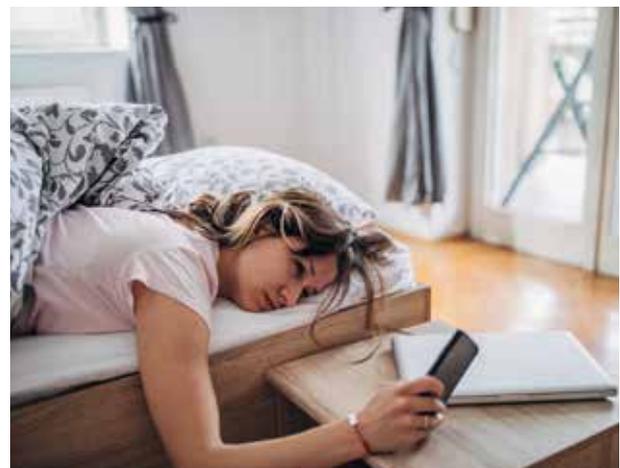
be signed by a practitioner next to his or her initials and surname printed in block letters.

(3) If pre-printed stationery is used, a practitioner shall delete words which are not applicable.

IS THERE A RESTRICTION ON HOW LONG A PHYSIOTHERAPIST CAN BOOK A PATIENT OFF FOR

No, there is no restriction on how long a physiotherapist should book a patient off for. The exact period of recommended sick leave which is a requirement of Rule 16 (1) (h) should be informed by the practitioner's clinical reasoning, personal observation based on examination or as a result of information received from a patient but based on acceptable medical/clinical grounds as provided for in Rule 16 (1) (e).

I'M SICK





#MeToo Movement in Healthcare

The #MeToo movement brought the issue of sexual harassment into the spotlight and has positively impacted some organizations, but nurses continue to endure high rates of sexual harassment in the workplace.

The #MeToo Movement in Healthcare

The #MeToo campaign on social media has sensitised women all over the world to unwelcome attention or any behaviour that has made them feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Healthcare professionals need to be vigilant about any behaviour that could be construed as inappropriate.

Healthcare is particularly at risk for claims of sexual harassment. Boundaries of appropriate speech and conduct may be blurred in a situation where people see and discuss bodies and body parts and functions all day every day and are often required to work in close proximity, with physical contact.

The patient-practitioner relationship is founded on trust and entered into by mutual consent. Healthcare practitioners should give careful consideration to appropriate communication. Patients should be provided with appropriate facilities for undressing, as well as gowns, shorts and draping. If a personally invasive examination or

treatment in a sensitive area (eg, pelvic and breast exams) is to be performed there should be a same-sex third party present in the examination room and a chaperone or parent should be present for any patient who requests one. The presence of a third party should be documented in their records. Careful consideration should be given to the use of language and choice of techniques that may be perceived as inappropriate, especially if there are alternatives available.

The #MeToo campaign has shown that time does not make these issues go away. Indeed, it may happen that a person may reflect on a situation that took place when he or she was younger and decide to institute a complaint against a healthcare practitioner. These old, unresolved claims can surface at any time, creating a liability for healthcare practitioners and causing immense stress and anxiety, as well as potential negative exposure of the individual healthcare practitioner and the profession while the legal merit of such a claim is investigated.





UPGRADING FROM PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSISTANT TO PHYSIOTHERAPY TECHNICIAN

Dr Sonill Maharaj and Mr William Moyo

Members of the Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB)

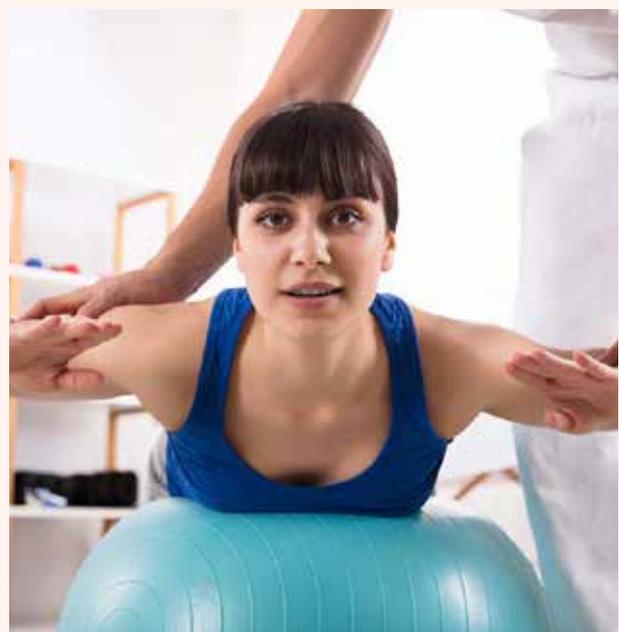
There are numerous requests from the current Physiotherapy Assistants who would like to upgrade their status to a Physiotherapy Technician status. It is challenging, for a number of reasons for universities to train and upgrade Physiotherapy Assistants to Physiotherapy Technicians. Based on this the Professional Board for Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics (PPB) has taken a decision to intervene.

A decision was taken at the PPB Board meeting on 2 October 2018 for a "grandfather" clause in which current Physiotherapy Assistants in public hospitals can upgrade to the status of a Physiotherapy Technician, but there will be no formal certificate for this. The Board conducted four (4) workshops in different provinces to assist the PTAs to prepare for the Board examinations. Physiotherapy Assistants will be allowed to undertake an HPCSA (PPB Board Examination). If they are successful with the Board Examinations, they will be allowed to register with the HPCSA (PPB) in the category of Physiotherapy Technician.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the PPB Board resolved that the examination will be postponed, and a new date will be set. Candidates will be notified accordingly.

All queries must be directed to:

PPB Secretariat: PPBboard@hpcsa.co.za





PODIATRISTS PRESCRIPTION RIGHTS

The prescription rights for Podiatry and Physiotherapy are still not finalised. The outgoing Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics Professional Board (PPB) managed to get the rights for the administration of local anaesthetic gazetted for Podiatrists. Though this is a notable achievement, the Board fully appreciates the frustration on the part of our colleagues, especially Podiatrists who are still unable to prescribe prescription-only medications.

The task team decided to separate the submissions to the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) into two submissions, one for each profession, i.e. one for Physiotherapy and one for Podiatry. This decision was made to facilitate the submission for the Podiatry document. The document for Podiatrists' prescription rights will be submitted to SAHPRA in July for consideration and possible approval. If the proposal is accepted as it is, some Podiatrists will need to undergo additional training before they are eligible to prescribe.

The proposal is for a six-month online course to upskill all podiatrists who wish to prescribe. Once approved by SAHPRA the document will be forwarded for Ministerial consideration by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). There was a slight delay in the submission of this document due to changes in the Podiatry degree. Additionally, there was a need to align the document to the new scope and minimum training standards documents, as well as the content for the prescriber's course. The proposed prescriber's course is part of the submission pack to SAHPRA and can be offered by the University of Johannesburg.

The new Board will take this process forward, and we wish them well in completing this task. We feel we have laid a strong foundation to enable them to complete the task swiftly.

GENERAL INFORMATION

For any information or assistance from the Council direct your enquiries to the Call Centre

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Fax: 012 328 5120

Email: info@hpcsacoza

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Weekends and public holidays – Closed

Certified Extracts from the register. Certificates of Status, Verification of Licensure

Email: lebogangm@hpcsacoza

Email: stantonp@hpcsacoza

Change of contact details

Email: records@hpcsacoza

Scope, ethical, practice related and CPD queries

Email: Professionalpractice@hpcsacoza

Service Delivery

Email: servicedelivery@hpcsacoza

Tel: 012 3389301

Lodging of complaints against registered practitioners

Email: legalmed@hpcsacoza

Statistical Information and data bases

Email: yvetted@hpcsacoza

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