

Media Statement

The Professional Board for Dental Assisting, Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene celebrates National Oral Health Month

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For immediate release

Pretoria – The Professional Board for Dental Assisting, Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene under the ambit of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) recognises and celebrates September as National Oral Health Month. The aim of the Professional Board in celebrating National Oral Health month is to educate, promote and reinforce good oral health and oral hygiene practices amongst the community.

Fortunately, it is simple to maintain good oral health, and this requires following a daily oral health cleaning and maintenance programme. This involves brushing of the teeth twice a day for at least two minutes in the morning and evening; using a good toothpaste; flossing between the teeth to eliminate small food particles that may be stuck between the teeth; the use of a mouthwash; eating healthy low-sugar or sugar-free food and beverages; and most importantly undergoing regular check-ups by visiting a dentist, dental therapist or oral hygienist at least every six months. This will assist in ensuring that dental cavities and any other dental problems that are detected are treated appropriately and timeously. This will also lead to reduced dental and treatment costs, less pain and result in healthy teeth and gums.

Good oral health and hygiene is not only important for general health but also plays a vital role in one's appearance, confidence and physical presentation. The Board has noted that there are illegal bleaching or teeth whitening practices that perform teeth whitening procedures. It is important to note that such procedures should always be conducted by a trained oral health professional prior to undergoing such procedures. Teeth whitening procedures undertaken using a home-kit or performed by non-oral health professional may lead to severe damage to the structures of the mouth.

During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is advisable to take extra care of one's general and oral health. Oral health professionals are trained to practise strict infection prevention and control measures, and these measures have been prioritised during this pandemic. Therefore, one should not delay in

seeking appropriate dental care. It is advisable to contact your oral health professional telephonically, seek advice and if necessary, make an appointment to obtain the required care.

It is important to remember that prevention is better than cure.

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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 guiding the professions, registration in terms of the Act is a prerequisite for practising any of the health professions registrable with Council.

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