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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **CAUTIONING AGAINST UNETHICAL BEHAVIOUR CONDUCTED BY REGISTERED PRACTITIONERS**

**10 May 2019**

**For immediate release**

**Pretoria** –The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) has a mandate to protect the public and guide the professions. Council takes this responsibility seriously to ensure optimal health for all through the provision of safe healthcare.

The Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing under the ambit of the HPCSA is concerned about the unethical conduct as well as transgressions of the Board specific guidelines and policies committed by practitioners registered with the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing, specifically, it has been brought to the Board's attention that:

1. Practitioners do not perform clinical examinations in accordance with the basic clinical guidelines prescribed by the Board as they relate to Basic Eye Exam, Fitting of Contact Lenses, Vision Screening, Low Vision Examination, Children Vision Screening;
2. Practitioners do not utilise the minimum equipment list which would assist in performing clinical examinations in accordance with the clinical guidelines;
3. Practitioners do not keep records in accordance with ethical rule 27 (h) of the Ethical Rules of Conduct for Practitioners registered in terms of the Health Professions Act, 1974; and the generic guidelines on the keeping of patient records;
4. Practitioners are training and/or allowing their frontline staff to dispense spectacles and contact lenses to their patients;
5. Practitioners conduct mobile practices without approval of the Board as per the mobile practice guidelines and ethical rules. Furthermore, such mobile practices are not in accordance with the specifications of the Board as outlined in the guidelines;
6. Practitioners are charging patients for services not rendered and/or products not prescribed and dispensed.

All the above constitute transgressions which may lead to disciplinary action. The HPCSA has a mandate to uphold, by ensuring that practitioners provide quality healthcare; as such, it will not hesitate to act against the current unethical behaviour conducted by some of the practitioners which impact on the service and quality healthcare to the public.

The Board is advising practitioners registered with the HPCSA to adhere to the ethical rules of conduct, the basic clinical guidelines and all relevant policies as prescribed by the Professional Board.

Practitioners and members of the community are encouraged to continue to report unethical activities conducted by registered and unregistered practitioners.

**END**

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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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