

HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA
SUBCOMMITTEE FOR POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION AND TRAINING
NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REGISTRATION OF SPECIALISTS IN
SOUTH AFRICA

NOTING:

1. The Standards Generating Body (SGB) Subcommittee of the Medical and Dental Professions Board (MDPB) has completed the process of aligning the qualification for specialists and subspecialists with the Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF) of South Africa;
2. The SGB subcommittee of the MDPB has defined the purpose, rationalé, prior learning, international comparability, assessment, moderation, criteria for assessors, and exit level outcomes and associated assessment criteria for clinical disciplines, pathology disciplines, surgical disciplines, and subspecialities;
3. The lack of uniformity of specialist training programmes with respect to the requirement for common core syllabi and integrated assessment, including portfolio assessment, formative assessment, continuous assessment, summative assessment, and assessment of research;
4. The variation in standards and approaches to the assessment of exit outcomes 1 and 2, which are related to professional knowledge, skills, and competence, with some being examined in a local examination (the Master of Medicine [MMed] route) and others taking a national examination (the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa route);
5. The low compliance with exit outcome 3 which is related to the need to 'undertake and complete a relevant research study';
6. The need to align the requirements for the registration of specialists with the SGB standards of the MDPB, to ensure uniform standards of training, and to maintain international comparability and recognition of South African-trained specialists;

RESOLVES TO IMPLEMENT THE SGB FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD BY SETTING NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION OF SPECIALISTS, AS FOLLOWS:

1. **Evidence of integrated assessment during training is required for registration as a specialist in South Africa.**
 - 1.1 The nature of integrated assessment will be defined by the SGB subcommittee of the MDPB from time to time.
 - 1.2 The Head of the Academic Department of the training institution is responsible for providing evidence of integrated assessment of each candidate in their programme.

2. Completion of a national curriculum and national professional examinations of exit level outcomes 1 and 2 is required for registration in South Africa.

- 2.1 The national core curriculum and professional outcomes for each speciality will be set by the Subcommittee on Postgraduate Education and Training (Medical) [PETM] in consultation with The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa and Universities according to requirements of the SGB subcommittee of the MDPB;
- 2.2 Candidates in each speciality will be required to undertake a national professional examination through a National Examining Body which is constituted by representatives of the training institutions and professional societies, such as The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa;
- 2.3 The outcomes of the professional examinations may be used as credits for Parts I and Part II of the MMed degree, by the universities.
- 2.4 The National Examining Body, which will be appointed as an agency of the MDPB from time to time, will abide by the SGB requirements of the Board;
- 2.5 The National Examining Body will be accredited by the PETM on a 5 yearly basis, at their cost, as part of the quality assurance process of the SGB subcommittee of the MDPB;

3. Completion of a research component is a requirement for registration as a specialist in South Africa.

- 2.1 All specialist trainees will be required to complete a relevant research study, under the supervision of the Head of Department or nominee;
- 2.2 The assessment criteria of the research study would be that appropriate theoretical knowledge is demonstrated; a research protocol is compiled according to required norms; and a progress report on the research project is given on a regular basis; and that research results are reported in a format of a dissertation according to acceptable scientific norms;
- 2.3 The research study will be a minimum of 60 credits in terms of the National Qualifications Framework;
- 2.4 The research study, which will be assessed at university level, may be used as a credit for Part III of the MMed degree.

NB: The date of implementation of the National Professional Examinations for Specialist is 1 January 2011.

These examinations will be regarded as single Exit Examinations for Specialists and Subspecialist.

--- oOo ---