



PSYCHOLOGY NEWS



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CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

The current world events coupled with the effects of COVID-19, looming recession, and political unrests, have resulted in people across the globe feeling emotionally and psychologically depleted. South African statistics reflect that anxiety, depression and trauma are the leading symptoms reported. In South Africa, we additionally face the emotional consequences experienced through loadshedding. These estimates and our current realities, reflect the need for a more proactive engagement from the psychological fraternity, if we are to address the psychological and emotional needs of the South African population. However, as a discipline, we are faced not only with the responsibility of addressing psychological needs of the country, but at the same time, we need to enhance and push for the growth and development of the profession. This is motivated solely by the need to create access to mental health services and facilities across the country. Access to mental health is vital for the overall health and progression of our society.

As it currently stands, there is an unequal distribution and concentration of psychologists in urban areas, something we have known since the inception of psychology in the country. However, we need to become more conscious of the fact that this remains a reality, with the majority of the population not having access to mental health services. While I acknowledge that this in part has to do with the lack of resources available, which impacts the training and availability of trained professionals and facilities. As a profession, we also have the responsibility to enhance and promote mental health. Further to this, South Africa has and is experiencing a brain drain, and many trained psychological professionals have left/are leaving the country, seeking better opportunities.

While the above paints a relatively morbid picture of the status of mental health in South Africa, it does present us with the opportunity to rethink mental health as we currently understand it and attempt to envision ways that would facilitate access to the services required.

The Professional Board for Psychology during its 2023/24 financial year will be embarking on a host of roadshows, discussing proposals for a new training framework for Psychology. A new training framework for Psychology will have minimal impact on our current practitioners but more for new entrance post 2025. We are hopeful that a renewed way of training and registering psychologists post 2025 will change the mental health landscape in South Africa for all.

Chairperson of the Professional Board for Psychology

Justin O August



PROF. CHARLES YOUNG RESIGNS AS THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

Prof. Young has resigned as the Vice-Chairperson of the Professional Board for Psychology effectively on 1 January 2023. He resigned after accepting an offer of a post of Professor of Psychology at a University in Perth, Australia.

He served the Professional Board for Psychology since 2015 when he was appointed by the Honourable Minister of Health and he was reappointed to the Board for a second term in 2020.

During the past seven years, he has served on various committees of the Board. He also served as the Chairperson of the Scope Task Team, Chairperson of the Neuropsychology Review Panel, Chairperson of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Committee, as well as being a member of the Working Group on Promulgation of Scope Regulations. Prof. Young served the Board and the profession with passion and excellence.

The Board wishes to express its appreciation and gratitude to Prof. Young for the dedication and commitment to the work of the Board during his tenure, and it has been a great honour to have him in the Board. Our best wishes are conveyed to him for a successful career and future!

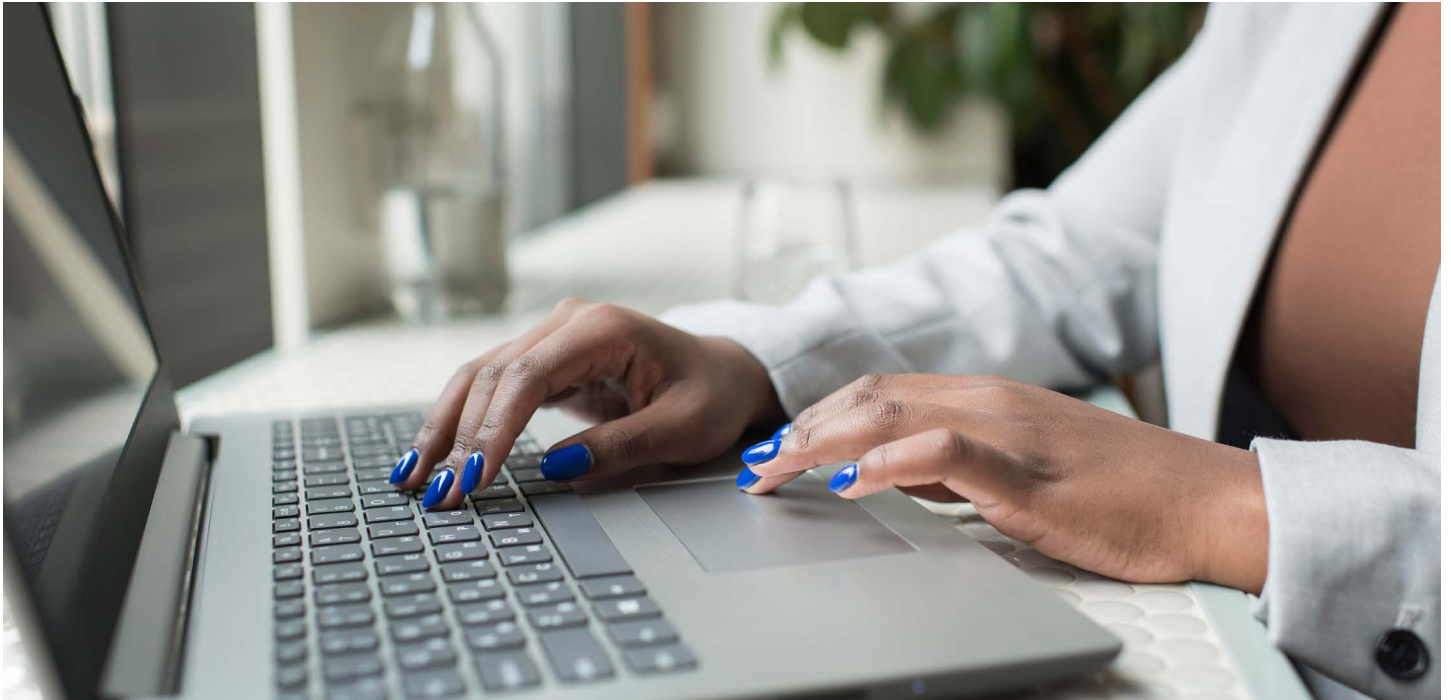




HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA: ONLINE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The HPCSA launched an online complaints management system in August 2022 which is aimed at ensuring that the HPCSA upholds its mandate and becomes a more effective and efficient regulatory body. The Online Complaints Management System will enable members of the public and practitioners to:

- Lodge complaints against registered practitioners on the online platform
- Ease of tracking of cases and communication with relevant officials



HOW TO ACCESS THE ONLINE COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- The system is available on the HPCSA website under online services
- Complainants are requested to create a profile before lodging a complaint
- Practitioners will use their HPCSA online portal login details to access the system

Link: <https://hpcsaonline.custhelp.com/>

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM PRACTITIONERS

- To utilise the system in responding to the allegations within the stipulated time period
- Engage with relevant officials where clarity is needed

HOW DOES SYSTEM BENEFIT PRACTITIONERS

- The complaint will reflect against the profile of the practitioner on the portal
- Ease of communication through the system



PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES WITH CHILDREN IN CASES WHERE THERE IS PARENTAL DISPUTE

Prof. MB Ngcobo-Sithole

Chairperson: Committee of Preliminary Enquiry

This article explores the issue of parental consent for psychological activities involving children in cases where there is a dispute between parents or between a parent and a child regarding consent. The article arose from a commitment to guide practitioners and protect the rights and well-being of those involved. It aims to contribute to the ethical practice of psychology practitioners. While there is relevant legislation governing this matter, it is important to note that the legal framework is a complex piece of legislation and there is a need to provide guidance to professionals working with children.

Section 129 of the Children's Act states that a child may consent to his or her own medical treatment or to the medical treatment of his or her child if: (a) the child is over the age of 12 years; and (b) the child is of sufficient maturity and has the mental capacity to understand the benefits, risks, social and other implications of the treatment. Determining maturity can be challenging since there are no guidelines from the Act or its Regulations on how to assess maturity or mental capacity. Practitioners should note that under the Children's Act, parental consent is generally required for various matters involving children. The Act also recognises that the best interests of the child in making any determination should be paramount. This means that practitioners have a duty to protect, respect, promote and fulfil children's rights in all decisions.

When both parents have full parental rights, either parent may give their own consent to a psychological intervention. However, the psychology practitioner must consider the views and wishes expressed by the co-holder of parental responsibilities and rights if the proposed assessment or therapy could significantly change or have a major impact on the child's health.

Major impact can be expected in:

- decisions that would affect contact between the child and his or her parents; or
- decisions likely to change, or have a negative effect on, the child's living conditions, education, health, personal relation with a parent or family member or, generally, the child's well-being.

When parents are divorced, obtaining informed consent for a child can be a complex process. The specific procedures may vary depending on the circumstances of the case, but here are general considerations:

1. **Custody arrangements:** If there is a legal custody arrangement in place, the practitioner should review the terms of the custody order or agreement to determine which parent has the authority to provide consent for the child's assessment or therapy. Typically, the parent with legal custody may have authority to make decisions

about the child's healthcare, including psychological interventions. If both parents have joint legal custody and are required to make decisions about the child together, the practitioner needs to obtain consent from both parents.

2. **Court orders or agreements:** In some cases there may be specific court orders or agreements in place to outline how consent for the child's healthcare and psychological interventions should be obtained. The practitioner should review these documents and follow the prescribed instructions accordingly.
3. **Mediation:** In cases where there is a dispute between the parents regarding consent for the psychological intervention or assessment, it is necessary to involve a mediator or seek legal intervention to resolve the issue. The Children's Act also allows for the matter to be brought before the court for resolution. This can ensure that the child's best interests are considered and that decisions are made in accordance with the law.
4. **Communication with both parents:** It is important for the practitioner to communicate with both parents to inform them about the assessment process and obtain their input. This can ensure that both parents have an opportunity to contribute information and express any concerns they may have.

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is the regulatory body responsible for the professional development and conduct of psychology practitioners including other healthcare professionals. If the Professional Board for Psychology finds that the psychology practitioner has failed to obtain informed consent as determined by the legal framework and ethical guidelines, disciplinary action might be taken against the practitioner. This can include sanctions such as reprimands, fines, suspension of practice or removal from the professional register. It is worth mentioning that laws and regulations can change over time, so it is essential to refer to the most up-to-date versions.

When in doubt, seek guidance from a colleague or a legal professional to fully understand the implications of a particular situation and ensure you are aware of accurate and current information.

References

Health Professions Council of South Africa: Rules of Conduct pertaining specifically to psychology. Form 223 available at: https://www.hpcsa.co.za/Content/upload/psb/rules/ANNEXURE_12.pdf [accessed 19 July 2023]

South Africa: Act No. 38 of 2005, Children's Act [South Africa], 19 June 2006, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/46b82aa62.html> [accessed 19 July 2023]

We Are Hiring!



INVITATION FOR EVALUATORS TO SUBMIT CURRICULUM VITAE

One of the mandates of the Professional Board of Psychology is to ensure that programmes offered by the universities and internship institutions comply with specific requirements, this is done to ensure that the interests of the public are protected. The Board's Accreditation and Quality Assurance Committee appoints a panel of evaluators to evaluate these programmes at the institutions from time-to-time.

For some time, programme evaluations were put on hold following the national state of disaster. Now that the Board has resumed with these evaluations, it is experiencing a backlog and is inviting interested professionals to assist with the evaluation of programmes offered by universities and internship institutions. Evaluators are required especially in the Registered Counsellor and Psychometry categories.

To ensure that these evaluators are well equipped and use a common approach to all evaluations conducted, the Board will arrange a workshop to train the prospective evaluators. The criteria to be met include the following:

- Proof of registration with the HPCSA for three (3) years or more
- Proof of being registered in good standing or status.
- Five (5) years' experience in teaching and training of professional psychology programmes at institutions of higher education.

For submission and more information please contact Ms Matshidiso Mogole at:

MatshidisoMo@hpcsa.co.za

of the Division: Education and Training.

INVITATION FOR EXPERIENCED EXAMINERS & MODERATORS TO SUBMIT CURRICULUM VITAE

The Professional Board for Psychology has been delegated the powers to appoint Examiners, Markers, Moderators and Invigilators, as provisioned for in terms of Section 15b of the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974. To ensure continuity in the examinations process, the Board invites practitioners to submit their Curriculum Vitae for consideration in order to assist the Board with facilitating and administering the National Board Examinations. The criteria to be met include the following:

- Five (5) years' experience in teaching and training of professional psychology programmes at institutions of higher education
- Proof of registration with the HPCSA for three (3) years or more
- Proof of being registered in good standing or status.

The criteria does not apply for invigilators. When submitting your CV, please indicate what you wish to assist with.

For submission and more information please contact Ms Matshidiso Mogole at:

MatshidisoMo@hpcsa.co.za

of the Division: Education and Training.



APPOINTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGISTS FOR CRIMINAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS

In terms of the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977, a list of Psychologists was established for purposes of the final appointment of psychologists for criminal capacity assessments. In cases of the appointment of a psychologist based on court judgements which was assigned to the Board for reasons such as the assessment of a client/patient or for child custody cases, the Board or HPCSA was in many instances approached and required to appoint a suitable person.

The appointment of psychologists based on court judgments which was assigned to the Board was delegated to the Chairperson of the Board in order to avoid delays. However, no criteria existed for such appointments.

It was resolved that a list of psychologists in the different provinces be compiled for possible appointment based on Court Judgments in line with criteria developed by the Board for this purpose.

The Board noted the lists of approved psychiatrists and psychologists in terms of Section 11(3) of the Child Justice Act 2008 as well as the list of private psychiatrists and clinical psychologists in terms of Section 79(9) and 286(A) of the Criminal Procedure Act 1977 and that the work was mostly done by clinical psychologists.

The Board emphasised the importance of defining the categories of psychologists to be regarded suitable to perform the assessments, the importance of provincial coverage, contracting and numeration of professionals which was being done by the courts and not HPCSA in these cases. Furthermore, the issues of upskilling of knowledge and standardisation on these assessments was important.

If the Board was requested to nominate a Psychologist for a particular case, then the practitioner was contracted by the attorneys and it was important that the Board nominate practitioners of good standing and who were well experienced.

Cases were referred by the courts to the Board to nominate or appoint a psychologist and these were mostly child custody and maintenance related cases and not criminal related.

The Board was mandated to develop a database of competent and experienced psychologists without specifying the specific categories to perform the assessments as directed by the courts for the term of the Board until 2025.

The following criteria was determined for the consideration of CVs and nominations to serve on the database to do assessments as directed by the courts:

Three (3) years registration as a psychologist; and at least three (3) years of working experience in the forensic domain, expert witness, assessments or child custody related cases; a post-graduate training/qualification in Forensic Psychology (i.e. Diploma, Masters degree or Doctorate); in addition, any of the following: Forensic psychology training during professional Masters and internship programme; or Forensic Psychology CPD courses; or Publication or presentation of a peer reviewed article or peer reviewed congress paper on a forensic theme; or Evidence of research, teaching, supervision, presentation of a training workshop in forensic psychology; or Evidence of intervention work within the forensic domain



COMPLIANCE WITH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a legal requirement in terms of section 26 of Health Professions Act 56 of 1974, as amended. CPD is the process of documenting and tracking the skills, knowledge and experience that practitioners gain both formally and informally as they work, this being beyond any initial training. The primary purpose of CPD is to ensure that all practitioners maintain and improve their professional knowledge, skills and performance for improved patient/client and health systems outcomes.

In an effort to improve the efficiency of the CPD programme, the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) approved some amendments to some aspect of CPD programme; mainly pertaining to the manner of submission of evidence for CPD compliance. The amendments are as follows:

- The practice of random sampling practitioners from the HPCSA's database to verify compliance has been discontinued. All registered practitioners are now expected to always remain compliant to CPD requirements;

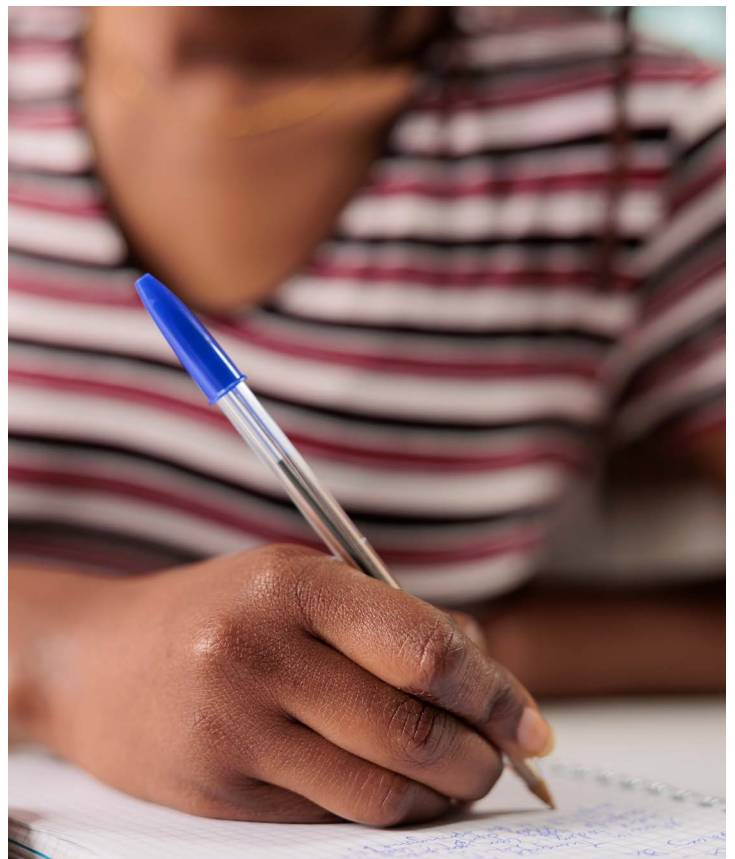
- Online self-service platform on the HPCSA's website is now available to all registered practitioners in order to submit enquiries and/or upload necessary evidence of CPD compliance. Registered practitioners can view the CPD status online;
- For all approved CPD activities, the HPCSA has approved that the facilitators submit the attendance registers directly to HPCSA to update practitioner's CPD status. This was officially effective on 1 March 2022;
- Issuance and submission of Continuous Education Unit (CEUs) certificates is no longer mandatory, as the information will be provided directly to the HPCSA by the approved facilitators of the activities;
- The online portal will remain active in order to cater for the exceptions of the above, example is when CPD was facilitated by international provider, submission of published manuscripts, submission of level two activities such as formal qualifications etc.

Practitioners need to ensure that they are in possession of a certificate of attendance for every CPD activity they have attended. Practitioners are to check that providers have uploaded the activities on their portal.

DISCONTINUATION OF VIRTUAL NATIONAL BOARD EXAMINATIONS

In April 2022, Cabinet lifted South Africa's national state of disaster that had resulted due to the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19). Subsequent to that pronouncement, the HPCSA revoked its Business Continuity Plan, which only permitted virtual examinations during that period. Thus, virtual National Board Examinations were an interim measure in response to the restrictions placed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Professional Board for Psychology in its recent meeting resolved that due to the national state of disaster being lifted and Council revoking the Business Continuity Plan, the National Board Examinations will return to venue-based examinations as from June 2023. Examinations will be conducted in the major cities as previously, i.e. Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Durban, Polokwane and Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth).





EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMMES IN PSYCHOLOGY, REGISTERED COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOMETRY



The Professional Board for Psychology, in consultation with members of the evaluation panels, has updated the criteria against which professional programmes in psychology are evaluated. The Board made the evaluation criteria available to university departments in the interests of good practice and continuous quality assurance. We hope that with transparent evaluation criteria, Academic Departments will work towards achieving or exceeding all of the standards, not only in preparation for the evaluations that normally occur once every five years but rather as an ongoing commitment to quality assurance.

Each of the ten criteria is associated with minimum standards that are further broken down into key elements or examples. Evaluators will rate the programmes that they are evaluating for each of the ten criteria. Four options are available: (4) Exceeds minimum standards; (3) Meets minimum standards; (2) Partially meets standards; and (1) Does not meet standards. Evaluation panels will complete a report with recommendations based on the evaluation criteria, which will be considered first by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance for a recommendation to the Board for Psychology.

Some of the historical requirements do not apply to new programmes that are being evaluated for the first time. It should be noted that while many of the standards and items apply to all categories (Clinical, Counselling, Educational, Research and Industrial Psychology, Neuropsychology, Psychometry and Registered Counsellor), some are specific to particular categories. This is clearly indicated.

These criteria are new and will be further revised as needed. All other related documentation is updated in accordance with the evaluation criteria in the coming months.

EXCEEDING OF TIMEFRAME FOR REGISTRATION BY REGISTERED COUNSELLORS – AMENDMENT TO FORM 258: FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATION, TRAINING, REGISTRATION AND SCOPE OF REGISTERED COUNSELLORS

Graduates have to register as Registered Counsellors within the required timeframes as stipulated by the Board in Form 258 after completion of their academic and practical training. Persons who exceeded the timeframe for registration as a Registered Counsellor will be required to submit an assessment report from their university or training institute, stating that the university had assessed the individual and was satisfied or not satisfied with the candidate's theoretical knowledge.

It should be noted that permission should first be requested from the Education, Training and Registration Committee of the Board to complete an additional practicum, thereafter an assessment be conducted by the university or training institute.



THE CREDO / PLEDGE FOR PSYCHOLOGY PRACTITIONERS

Allow me to advise that the HPCSA, as the statutory body for health professions, considered unifying the oaths that were taken at universities and proposed one oath for every health profession in the country. The Human Rights and Ethics Committee of Council then resolved that Professional Boards be permitted to develop their own oaths and not a generic oath as was initially intended.

In consultation with stakeholders, the Professional Board for Psychology resolved to approve and implement credo/pledge as an aspirational code for psychological practitioners. The credo/pledge was not compulsory, but a recommendation from the HPCSA.

Universities were at liberty to determine how to conduct the ceremony and when, the credo/pledge should also bear a signature of a witness who is a registered psychology practitioner.





LINKING OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME WITH ACADEMIC TRAINING

The Education, Training and Registration Committee of the Professional Board for Psychology had previously resolved to direct institutions to revert to the re-linking of internship training with academic training. Universities were required to assume responsibility for the education and training of students /intern psychologists enrolled for the master's programmes at their institutions leading to professional registration as Psychologists. This includes the quality assurance of tailored internship programmes in line with discussions held with Heads of Departments in past meetings.

Universities are to have implemented relinking of internship with their academic training by the start of academic year January 2024, relinking applied to all professional Masters programmes. Universities were advised that -

Relinking of an internship meant that institutions should only award its degrees if all three components of the programme have been completed, namely (i) formal coursework, (ii) research component, and (iii) a 12-month full-time internship.

By linking the internship to their programme as a requirement for the awarding of the degree, Departments of Psychology acknowledged their responsibility to supervise and oversee the quality of internship programmes, particularly in cases where students complete tailored internship programmes.

The relinking of internships did not imply any restrictions of internship programmes to one training institution only.

Departments should consult their institutional policies and regulations to enable these requirements to be met within the policy framework of their institution.

The Professional Board wishes to thank universities who have implemented the request.



Health Professions Council of South Africa

CONTACT DETAILS

NATURE OF QUERY	CONTACT
HPCSA Call Centre	Tel: (+27) 12 338 9300
All registration related matters Annual fee payments, Practising Cards, Restorations to the register	Email: kgomotsom@hpcsa.co.za and neilf@hpcsa.co.za
Certified Extracts from the register. Certificates of Status, Verification of Licensure	Email: lebogangm@hpcsa.co.za
Applications for Registration (Foreign Qualified)	Ms Matshidiso Mogole Email: matshidisomo@hpcsa.co.za
Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) Evaluations, approval of programmes and other programme related issues Board Examinations	HoD: Education and Training - Ms O Mabotja Manager: Education and Training - Ramasela Ndlala RamaselaN@hpcsa.co.za Ms Matshidiso Mogole : Education and Training Co-ordinator Email: matshidisomo@hpcsa.co.za
Internship Training and education related matters	HoD: Education and Training- Ms O Mabotja Manager: Education and Training - Ramasela Ndlala RamaselaN@hpcsa.co.za Ms Matshidiso Mogole : Education and Training Co-ordinator Email: matshidisomo@hpcsa.co.za
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Lodging of complaints against registered practitioners	Email: Legalmed@hpcsa.co.za
HPCSA Ombudsman Office	Email: Ombudsman@hpcsa.co.za
Inspectorate Office- Dealing with non- registered persons	Email: Inspectorate@hpcsa.co.za
Statistical Information and data bases	Email: Yvetted@hpcsa.co.za
Executive Company Secretariat	Board and Committee Secretariat, arrangements and facilitation of Board, Committee and Task Team meetings. Policy Development, review and update of policies and guidelines, report writing. Board Newsletter and stakeholder engagement and advocacy. Operationalisation and implementation of Board five- year strategy, development and maintaining of Board Annual Performance Plan (APP), Risk Register and maintaining of risk treatment actions plans.
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	Administrator- Vacant
	Ms Hilda Baloyi : Committee Coordinator Email: hildab@hpcsa.co.za
	Ms Portia Khati - Deputy Company Secretary Email: portiak@hpcsa.co.za



GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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Change of contact details

Email: records@hpcsa.co.za

Scope, ethical, practice related and CPD queries

Email: Professionalpractice@hpcsa.co.za

Service Delivery

Email: servicedelivery@hpcsa.co.za

Tel: 012 3389301

Lodging of complaints against registered practitioners

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Statistical Information and data bases

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