

HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

**THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR OPTOMETRY AND
DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

**GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISING PRACTITIONERS &
GRADUATES REGISTERED UNDER SUPERVISED PRACTICE**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines to supervisors who would be requested to supervise and mentor practitioners needing clinical practice supervision in order to meet the required competencies for registration with the HPCSA.

BACKGROUND:

The idea is in accordance with the mandate of the HPCSA i.e. to protect the public and guide the profession. Practitioners wishing to register for independent practice must demonstrate the required competencies to provide a high standard of professional services to the community served. Where a practitioner is not practicing in the profession yet, or has left independent practice for a significant period of time, supervised practice may be required. In order for the Board / Council to ensure that these practitioners meet the requirements and are not a potential risk to the public, the board proposes that practitioners requiring supervised practice for a stipulated period be assisted/appraised according to the following framework.

GUIDELINES:

The Professional Board resolved that practitioners completing the stipulated period of supervised practice be restored to the independent practice register immediately upon submission of a compliant application under the following conditions:

- i. submission of a report by the supervisor to the Chairperson of the Education Committee or the Board as to the acquired competency of the practitioner or whether a further period of supervised practice is recommended;
- ii. upon submission of a successful report from the supervisor, the practitioner may be registered as an independent practitioner
- iii. the practitioner must begin to accrue the necessary CEUs as per the CPD Guidelines during the period of supervised practice;

SUPERVISED PERIOD SHOULD INCLUDE ACTIVITIES INVOLVING-

1. Clinical practice and patient management
2. CPD activities
3. Admin / management responsibilities

WHO SHOULD BE THE MENTOR AND SUPERVISOR?

1. A registered practitioner should be on the appropriate and current HPCSA register for independent practice.

2. The mentor and supervisor should have been in an accredited practice for a minimum of 3 years. The accreditation of the practice should be the responsibility of the university from which the practitioner obtained the qualification.
3. The supervisor should not have any professional conduct enquiry pending against his/her name or have a ruling against them.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MENTOR / SUPERVISOR WILL BE TO:

1. Ensure that in terms of these guidelines, the practitioner is temporarily registered as an "optometrist under supervised practice" before assumption / resumption of duties
2. Identify weak and strong areas of competence to focus on during the updating period
3. Provide guidance to the practitioner being mentored / supervised
4. Ensure that at any stage, the practitioner is not left unsupervised in a practice to consult with patients.
5. Submit a written progress report to the Board at the end of the updating / supervised practice period.
6. Recommend to the PBODO whether the practitioner being supervised may be registered with Council as an Independent practitioner without supervision or whether further supervision is required.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RETURNING PRACTITIONERS

1. Consider whether they have accrued appropriate training and skills to practice safely before assuming the responsibility of Independent practice.
2. Ensure that they are appropriately registered with the HPCSA.
3. Be aware of all regulatory policies, protocols and guidelines of the HPCSA prior to embarking on independent practice.
4. Actively participate in continuing professional development.
5. Sustain and continuously improve knowledge and skills even after the supervised updating period.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate competency in performing all procedures and examinations within his/her scope of practice. Exposure must be provided in all clinical areas and exposure to general practice management viz.
 - a) General Clinical skills
 - b) Contact Lenses
 - c) Paediatric Optometry
 - d) Binocular Vision
 - e) Low Vision
 - f) Ocular Diseases
 - g) Optical Dispensing
 - h) Practice Management
 - i) Ethics

2. Observe health and safety regulations during the provision of clinical services.

FORMAT OF REPORTING

At the end of the supervised period, the supervising practitioner must generate a report containing the following information:

1. Name and HPCSA registration number of practitioner.
2. Dates of commencement and termination of supervised practice period
3. Name and registration number of supervising practitioner
4. Address and telephone number of practice
5. Details of the clinical exposure experienced by the practitioner in the clinical areas above.
6. Numbers of patients consulted under supervision in each category within areas above.
7. Comments on the performance of the practitioner in:
 - a. Clinical Areas – detail strengths and possible weaknesses
 - b. General Practice management skills
8. Recommendation: The supervisor must indicate whether he/she recommends that the practitioner has the necessary competence to be registered for independent practice, or whether a further period of supervised practice is recommended. Should the recommendation be for further supervised practice, then this must be accompanied by a detailed motivation for decision, highlighting specific areas of concern.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS

All communication should be addressed to:

The Registrar
Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians
P O Box 205
PRETORIA
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