

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **HPCSA ACHIEVING SIGNIFICANT STRIDES**

**17 May 2019**

**For immediate release**

**Pretoria** – The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) welcomes the proclamation by the country's President, President Cyril Ramaphosa on the SIU's investigation into alleged unlawful or improper conduct by employees of the HPCSA.

In February 2015, the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi acting in accordance with the provision of Section 6(g)(5) of the Health Professions Amendment Act, 29 of 2007, took a decision to appoint a Ministerial Task Team (MTT) to investigate allegations made around the HPCSA. In October 2015, the Minister of Health released the MTT report.

Based on the outcome of the report, Council embarked on a Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) project. The BPR project is aimed at enhancing Council's effectiveness and efficiencies through streamlined services that will ensure that it becomes a reputable, professional regulatory body. It is estimated that Council will reap the rewards of the investment made on the turnaround over a five-year period. However, over the past two years, the HPCSA has made remarkable strides in ensuring that it achieves the goals and objectives of the BPR Project.

The MTT report highlighted a need for full organisational review which would be inclusive of a new governance and administrative structure. The revised organisational structure aims to consolidate HPCSA's structure into five high-level functional areas enabling –

- Development of specific functional knowledge and expertise within each function,
- Clear accountability enabling identification of inefficiencies,
- Better departmental coordination & a stable environment, and
- Faster decision making.

The new organisational structure became effective in August 2018.

On 24 August 2018, the HPCSA, in line with its determination to turn Council around into a transparent and credible regulator, submitted a request to the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) to investigate any conduct of maladministration, corruption or corrupt activities (including fraud) in connection with the mandate of Council as contained in the Act, against any person, including amongst others –

- (a) Registration of persons in terms of the Act (including the integrity of all registers kept in terms of the act);
- (b) provision or offering of education and training having as its object to qualify any person for the practising of any profession to which the provisions of the Act apply;
- (c) Approval or accreditation of any education or training programme (including internship) and approval or accreditation of any institution to offer such a programme;
- (d) provision or conducting of any examination or evaluation (whether at undergraduate or post graduate level) approved or accredited or recognised by the Council for the purposes of registration in terms of the Act;

The SIU is currently undertaking its own internal processes in this regard.

Furthermore, an Anti-Corruption Forum on Health was established to deal with all allegations of maladministration within the Health Sector. Council would like to re-assure the public of its commitment to eradicate corruption.

After having an acting Registrar for 24 months, Council appointed a new Registrar, Dr Raymond Billa. The immediate focus of the Registrar – Dr Billa, is to implement a 14 - Point Plan that seeks to cement the outcomes of the turnaround project currently under way. The 14 - Point Plan anchors around the following quick wins:

1. Building a new culture

Building a new a culture which will be a reflection of the new image of the HPCSA. A culture reset project is in conceptualisation to implement this thinking by the Registrar. The purpose of the project is to ensure that all employees of the HPCSA and members of the governance structures re-commit to the values of the HPCSA.

2. Addressing foreign qualified practitioner issues

With regard to addressing the backlog on foreign-qualified practitioners, previously one university would coordinate and host the medical and dental board examinations for both theory and practical purposes. HPCSA, is currently faced with a backlog of medical board examinations as there are multitudes of foreign-qualified applicants. To alleviate this challenge, an agreement has been signed with the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Board of Medical Examiners (both based in the USA) to conduct an online-based examination to accommodate

the large number of applications. The practical examinations will continue to be held at the local medical institutions, with approximately three universities hosting a similar examination at the same time.

### 3. Customer Satisfaction Levels

Council has conducted a customer satisfaction survey, which has helped pinpoint the areas in operations that require more focused attention to improve customer experience. The focus will be on the call centre, the contact centre, the reduction of turnaround times across the whole organisation and implementation of the new Oracle Service Cloud. The new Oracle Service Cloud implementation will increase efficiency by alleviating long queues that are normally found at the HPCSA Head Office thus delivering an alternative service channel.

### 4. Capacitation

Council is committed to appointing more HPCSA registered practitioners to take up positions within the organisation. Currently, the HPCSA has reconfigured the Complaints Handling Unit and has appointed six investigators who are health professionals and have a better understanding of health-related complaints. Council continues to fill vacant positions to ensure that technical skills and competencies are available to deliver on its mandate. Once the new structure is fully applied, it will improve the entity's value proposition to the current and potential client.

Council believes that with the turnaround outcomes being bedded down and the Registrar/CEO at the helm, the image of the HPCSA can only improve in the mid to long term. Council understands that the turnaround journey is not going to be an easy one, however, with the initial steps already taken, the HPCSA can only get better.

**END**

---

## **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.

---

**Issued by:**

Dr MR (Raymond) Billa  
REGISTRAR/ CEO  
Health Professions Council of South Africa

**Tel: 012 338 9481**

**Cell: 071 680 8111**

**Email: [daphneyc@hpcsa.co.za](mailto:daphneyc@hpcsa.co.za)**