

POSITION STATEMENT ON THE ALLOCATION OF NON-SPECIALISED NURSES IN SPECIALISED UNITS

1. Preamble

The South African Nursing Council (SANC) is a statutory body established in terms of the Nursing Act, 2005 (Act no. 33 of 2005), to regulate the Nursing and Midwifery professions by establishing, setting and maintaining the standards of nursing education and practice in the Republic of South Africa. SANC advocates on behalf of the public in matters concerning nursing by monitoring compliance with nursing and relevant regulatory frameworks.

2. Background

The SANC is cognizant of the constant changing environment and increase in the burden of disease, in the health care system, which has a direct impact on nursing care provision. Post training and registration, nurse specialists are allocated in specialised units to manage critical health care users who often require a range of highly specialised skills and complex nursing care, depending on their specific health needs or conditions.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this position statement is to address inconsistencies in nursing practice, with regards to the allocation of non-specialized nurses in specialized units. This position statement is informed by Section 4 (7) government gazette R. 767 of 1 October 2014, which sets out the Acts or Omissions in respect of which the Council may take disciplinary steps.

4. Definitions

4.1 Nurse Specialist

A Nurse Specialist is a Professional Nurse who has undergone and met the theoretical and practical requirements of a specific postgraduate nursing programme of at least one-year duration, has in-depth knowledge and expertise in a specific practice area and is registered as such by the SANC.

4.2 Specialty unit

A specialty unit is a unit within a health establishment that is purposefully designed, and resourced with relevant specialized equipment to provide specialized care to health care users with specific health conditions. These units include but are not limited to the following: Intensive Care Units (ICU), Renal dialysis Units, Oncology, Labour Ward.

5. SANC POSITION

- 5.1. All specialised units must be managed by a qualified Nurse Specialist.
- 5.2. Each shift should be led by a qualified Nurse Specialist.
- 5.3. In a specialised unit, a primary care giver shall always be a Professional Nurse registered as a Nurse Specialist or at least an experienced Professional Nurse who has undergone at least 80 hours' induction, in the relevant speciality and shall work under the supervision of a registered Nurse Specialist.
- 5.4. Professional Nurses who are undergoing specialist training must perform their duties under the supervision of a registered Nurse Specialist in that unit.
- 5.5. Enrolled Nurses and Enrolled Nursing Assistants must not be allocated as primary care givers in specialty units.



S A Mchunu (Ms)
Registrar and CEO
S A Nursing Council

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Cecilia Makiwane Building,
602 Pretorius Street, Arcadia, Pretoria 0083
Private Bag X132, Pretoria 0001,
Republic of South Africa



Tel: 012 420 1000
Fax: 012 343 5400
SANC Fraud Hotline: 0800 20 12 16



website: www.sanc.co.za