

SANC POSITION STATEMENT ON ISSUING OF SICK NOTES BY PROFESSIONAL NURSE PRACTITIONERS

1. PREAMBLE

The South African Nursing Council (SANC) is mandated in terms of the Nursing Act, 2005 (Act No. 33 of 2005) to regulate the Nursing and Midwifery professions by establishing and maintaining nursing education and training; as well as practice standards. The SANC advocates on behalf of the public in matters concerning nursing by monitoring compliance with Regulatory prescripts. The SANC is cognizant of the constant changing environment, legislation and relevant policies that affect and impact on the nursing profession.

2. PURPOSE

This position statement aims to address inconsistent practices with the issuing of sick notes by registered nurse practitioners and provide standardization of practices in the provision of nursing services both in the public and private practice. The position statement is informed by relevant policy provisions, consultation with relevant stakeholders and competencies for nurse specialists as well as benchmarking with best practice and will be subject to change in accordance with legislation applicable to nursing practice.

The SANC recognizes the provisions of section 23(2) of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997) in respect of the requirements for valid medical (sick) certificates, which must be issued and signed by a Medical Practitioner or any other person who is certified to diagnose and treat patients.

3. SANC POSITION

3.1. Professional Nurses with post basic diplomas/ additional qualifications who are registered as such by the South African Nursing Council are permitted to issue sick notes as they are deemed to be competent to provide specialized nursing care in their field of practice.

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N.B. Professional Nurses who do not possess the additional qualifications as stated above may **only issue certificates of attendance.**

3.2. **The recommended period for Professional Nurse Practitioners to issue out a sick note is a maximum of two (2) days.**

3.3. If the patient condition is not improved, the patient should be referred to a Medical Practitioner or to the next level of care for further management.

3.4. **To be valid; a sick note issued by the Nurse Practitioner must contain the following:**

- The name, address and qualification of the attending practitioner;
- The name of the patient;
- The date and time of the examination;
- Whether the certificate is being issued as a result of personal observations by the practitioner during an examination or as the result of information received from the patient, and is based on acceptable medical grounds;
- The exact period of recommended sick leave;
- The date of issuing of the sick note; and
- Identity of the practitioner who issued the certificate which shall be personally and originally signed by him or her next to his or her initials and surname in print or block letters.

3.5. Nurse Practitioners who fail to comply with these directives will be liable for acting beyond their scope of practice.

The Council approved the position statement at its meeting held on 29 June 2021.



**S A MCHUNU (MS)
REGISTRAR AND CEO
S A NURSING COUNCIL**

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