

**CIRCULAR 3/2023**

**TO: NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS OF HEALTH  
NURSING EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (NEIs)  
ALL STAKEHOLDERS**

**SUBJECT: MID-YEAR INTAKE OF STUDENTS FOR THE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES**

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this circular is to share with the National Department of Health, Provincial Departments of Health, Nursing Education Institutions (NEIs) and relevant stakeholders, the decision of Council regarding student intakes for the Postgraduate Diploma programmes in nursing.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The South African Nursing Council (SANC) is a statutory body which functions in terms of the Nursing Act, 2005 (Act No. 33 of 2005). It has a responsibility to establish, monitor, improve, and control conditions, standards and quality of Nursing and Midwifery Education and Training within the ambit of any other applicable law.
- 2.2 The last intake of students for the Post basic courses was in December 2019, i.e. in line with Regulations relating to the Course in Clinical Nursing Science leading to registration of an additional qualification (Government Notice No. R212 of 19 February 1993) as amended. This was as a result of the notice in the Government Gazette, published by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in July 2016, determining 2019 as the last academic year during which new entrants into the legacy programmes would be allowed. This necessitated the phasing out of all legacy nursing programmes. The implications were that from the academic year 2020, Nursing Education Institutions (NEIs), would commence with offering of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) aligned nursing programmes. This led to decline in training of nurses leading to registration of additional qualifications.
- 2.3 The Regulations Relating to the Approval of and the Minimum Requirements for the Education and Training of a Student Leading to Registration as a Nurse Specialist or Midwife Specialist (Government Notice No. 635 of 5 June 2020) was promulgated in June 2020 and the Nursing Education Institutions could only design their programmes after promulgation of these regulations. Promulgation of these regulations further led to delay in offering of the HEQSF aligned Postgraduate Diploma programmes in Nursing.



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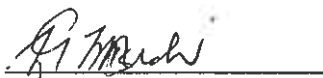
website: [www.sanc.co.za](http://www.sanc.co.za)

- 2.4 The reported shortage of Nurse Specialists and Midwife Specialist in both public and private sectors and the issues raised in section 2.2. and 2.3 above, necessitated that the Council reconsider the issue of mid-year intake for year programmes.
- 2.5 Further the regulations governing these programs (Regulations Relating to the Approval of and Minimum Requirements for the Education and Training of a Student Leading to Registration as a Nurse Specialist or Midwife Specialist R. No. 635 of 5 June 2020) holds that the training must take place in not less than one "Academic Year" which is defined as "a period of at least 1200 (one thousand two hundred notional hours which is equivalent to 120 (one hundred and twenty) credits;".
- 2.6 It is against this background that the Council in the ordinary meeting held on 30-31 March 2023 resolved to grant permission to the Nursing Education Institutions (NEIs) whose Postgraduate Diploma programme(s) have received full accreditation from both the SANC and Council on Higher Education (CHE) to have a mid-year intake in June 2023. The decision was taken because students who are undergoing Postgraduate Diploma programmes will not be subjected to Professional Entrance Examination on completion of the programme.

### 3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 NEIs who choose to have a mid-year intake in 2023 should not have an intake in January 2024 to prevent overcrowding in the clinical facilities and regularise intake months. However, should the NEIs have capacity to have another intake in January 2024, the SANC must be informed, and Master Educational Plan be submitted especially for the clinical programmes.

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