

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SECTORAL BARGAINING COUNCIL (PHSDSBC)**

09-02-2023

What's happening in the PHSDSBC?

Update: Standardisation of Remuneration and Conditions of Service for Community Health Workers (CHWs) - Department of Health

Members will recall that parties to Council signed a collective agreement extending the lifespan of PHSDSBC Resolution 1/2018 for two consecutive terms. The employer tabled a draft agreement to extend the lifespan once again with a further three years to allow parties to conclude on outstanding matters as per clause 5.5. The current lifespan of the agreement will come to an end on 10 July 2025. The PSA signed this agreement to ensure that CHWs will be employed for the next three years.

During the last Council meeting, labour raised serious legal implications with the approach of a sectoral determination despite the existence of a collective agreement and the binding nature of a collective agreement. The employer indicated that the due date for inputs into the sectoral determination was extended until 28 February 2023. Labour, however, is of the view that it is against legislation to make a sectoral determination whilst CHWs are covered by a collective agreement. Labour rejected a parallel process. The employer requested more time to consider its options. Parties to the Council agreed that the General Secretary of the Council will draft a letter to the Commission and subsequently confirm that there is a collective agreement in place that regulates the terms and conditions of employment of CHWs.

Training and nurses intake procedure

The employer presented the current context and policy on nursing student recruitment and selection processes. During the presentation, it became clear that the Policy Implementation Guidelines acknowledge that each nursing college has institutional autonomy and, as such, nursing colleges adhere to and incorporate the principles of the guideline whilst also having their distinct standard operating procedures, based on the uniqueness and dynamics of each province. Therefore, there is no national determined standardised ratio for external and internal candidates who may implement their ratios guided by provincial human resources development plans. The presentation further indicates that the Council on Higher Education's "Criteria for programme Accreditation" allows for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), therefore Communique 1 stipulates the following:

"Candidates in possession of a certificate in Auxiliary Nursing or a Certificate in Enrolled Nursing may apply for admission to an appropriate NQF level 6 programme by institutional rules on admission and Recognition of Prior Learning process. Based on the number of nurses who qualified between 2017 and 2019 that could be considered for access via RPL processes, a concession is granted for up to 50% of

the student intake to be granted via RPL, instead of the normal 10% limit. It is estimated that a period of three years would be adequate to enable career progression, thereafter the 10% RPL rule will apply“.

Labour noted the report and will study it for further engagement. Labour firmly believes that nursing colleges are under-utilised and that colleges should allow more nurses to study to rescue the health system.

Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER