



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

07-11-2025

Update: Skills Development Committee meeting

R171 programme (internal intake)

A communique (No 1 of 2022) from the Council for Higher Education (CHE) granted nursing colleges a concession allowing 50% internal and 50% external student admissions. This measure was intended to address the backlog in the training of nurses already in the system, as CHE regulations ordinarily require a 90% external and 10% internal intake ratio. The concession is due to lapse at the end of the 2025-academic year. The PSA raised concern that the backlog remains unresolved and therefore urged the employer to engage with the CHE to extend the concession beyond 2025.

Employer feedback

The employer confirmed that the CHE requested submission of data reflecting employees who still need to undergo the R171 Programme by 7 November 2025. The PSA remains hopeful that the extension will be granted, particularly since the CHE acknowledged the validity of the concern, which was echoed by all provinces nationally.

Preparations for 2026-academic year

The committee resolved to proactively continue preparations for the 2026 intake, including subjecting eligible candidates to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessments, scheduled for 28 November 2025. This approach aims to ensure that, should the CHE grant the extension, members can commence classes without delay.

The PSA emphasised that if the CHE declines to extend the concession, the Union will have no alternative but to oppose the admission of external candidates for the 2026-academic year. This stance is based on the belief that the ongoing backlog and limited accreditation numbers unfairly disadvantage employees in the system.

Any employee wants to join the PSA can contact Sylvia Watlkins on 082 880 8941 / Sylvia.watlkins@psa.co.za or Thandiwe Mziyako on 060 962 8512 / thandiwe.mathabela@psa.co.za.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER