

NOTICE 573 OF 2006**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH****PUBLICATION OF THE EXPLANATORY SUMMARY OF THE HEALTH
PROFESSIONS AMENDMENT BILL, 2006**

The Minister of Health intends to introduce the Health Professions Amendment Bill, 2006 ("the Bill") in Parliament in 2006. The explanatory summary of the Bill is hereby published in accordance with rule 241(c) of the Rules of the National Assembly.

The objectives of the Bill are to *inter alia*-

- (a) make clear and more comprehensive the objects and functions of the council in order to ensure that the objectives are achieved and are in line with the national health policy determined by the Minister;
- (b) foster closer liaison between the council and the boards when considering certain matters;
- (c) reduce the number of council members from 25 to 16, and to further regulate the appointment of the president and members of the council and the registrar;
- (d) make provision for the removal of members of the council under certain circumstances, e.g. failure to attend meetings without leave by the president or the chairperson, been found guilty of unprofessional conduct or having acted to the prejudice of the council;
- (e) empower the Minister to dissolve the council or terminate membership under certain circumstances;
- (f) ensure accountability and transparency by the council and the registrar, particularly relating to financial administration by the council;
- (g) empower the Minister to appoint members of the professional boards on the basis of nominations as opposed to the costly exercise of elections by members of the profession concerned;

- (h) make provision for the evaluation, quality assurance and accreditation process of teaching institutions and training facilities;
- (i) make provisions dealing with the keeping of a register, application for registration and removal of names from such register more comprehensive;
- (j) empower the Minister to make regulations excluding certain persons from performing compulsory community service;
- (k) enable professionals to further register in sub-specialities, professional categories and additional professional categories, and to replace the council with the professional board as the authority to register professionals;
- (l) guide the professions;
- (m) empower the Minister, after consultation with the council and the board, to make regulations relating to unprofessional conduct as opposed to this function being performed by the council only;
- (n) accentuate the provisions of the Medicines and Related Substances Act, 1965 (Act No. 101 of 1965) in so far as this Act regulates the compounding and dispensing of medicines and a prohibition of keeping an open shop or pharmacy;
- (o) empower the Minister to make regulations "after", and not "in" consultation with the council;
- (p) empower the council to make rules on operational issues affecting the council and the boards, e.g. to enable the council to determine professional fees to be paid to members of the council and the boards, and persons rendering different services to the council, and to determine different fees payable by professionals and institutions; and
- (q) gender sensitise the language of the current Act and make technical amendments and deletions.

The Bill, once passed, will amend the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974) as amended.

As soon as the Bill is introduced in Parliament, copies can be obtained from-

- Government Printers (Cape Town and Pretoria)

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