The South African Pharmacy Council

REGISTRATION AS A PHARMACIST’S ASSISTANT IN SOUTH AFRICA

GUIDELINES FOR PHARMACY SUPPORT PERSONNEL WHO HOLD A QUALIFICATION OBTAINED OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA

2010
INTRODUCTION

The South African Pharmacy Council has prepared this brochure for the information and guidance of overseas-trained pharmacy support personnel who wish to obtain recognition of their qualifications in South Africa. The brochure is intended as a guide only, and is not legally binding on any of the bodies listed. Although the information contained in this brochure is believed to have been accurate at the time of printing, registration requirements may vary from time to time.

The South African Pharmacy Council may be contacted as follows:

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<tr>
<td>591 Belvedere Street</td>
<td>P O Box 40040</td>
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Fax: 27 12 321 1492 / 27 12 319 8559
Web: www.pharmcouncil.co.za
Tel: 0861727200

It is, thus very important to note that you should first contact the Department of Health to enquire whether you can be placed in a public sector institution prior to applying to Council for registration.

For further information please contact the Department of Health at:
The Director General
Department of Health
Private Bag X828
PRETORIA
0001
As in most countries, the practice of a profession in South Africa requires evidence of an appropriate level of education and practical experience. The recognition of qualifications in most health-related professions is the responsibility of a registration authority established by government statute.

To be able to work as a pharmacist’s assistant in South Africa, registration with the South African Pharmacy Council is a prerequisite. The practice of pharmacy by unregistered persons is punishable by law. The procedure to be followed to obtain registration as a pharmacist’s assistant in South Africa is explained in this brochure.

In order to ensure that pharmacist’s assistants are competent within their scope of practice, unit standards or competency standards were developed. The training of pharmacist’s assistants must ensure competence in the unit standards identified. The following unit standards are prescribed for pharmacist’s assistants in terms of Section 33 of the Pharmacy Act No 53 of 1974 as amended:

(a) **Pharmacist’s assistant (basic):**

(i) Unit BL 1  – Provision of health advice, information and pharmacy products directly to the consumer;

(ii) Unit BL 2  – Provision of pharmacy products in hospital pharmacy;

(iii) Unit BL 3  – Pharmacy marketing;

(iv) Unit BL 4  – Stock control;

(v) Unit BL 5  – Manufacturing/compounding of pharmaceutical products;

(vi) Unit BL 6  – Packaging and/or pre-packing of pharmaceuticals;

(vii) Unit BL 7  – Control and distribution of finished pharmacy products;

(viii) Unit BL 8  – Collect information for research purposes.

(b) **Pharmacist’s assistant (post-basic):**

(i) Unit PBL 1  – Issuing of pharmacy products;

(ii) Unit PBL 2  – Stock control;

(iii) Unit PBL 3  – Manufacturing/compounding of pharmaceutical products;

(iv) Unit PBL 4  – Packaging and/or pre-packing of pharmaceuticals;

(v) Unit PBL 5  – Control and distribution of finished pharmacy products;
Unit PBL 6

(vi) Collect information for research purposes.

Pharmacists' assistants are accepted as an integral part of the delivery of pharmaceutical services in both the public and the private sectors. A smaller number of pharmacists' assistants work in manufacturing pharmacies, wholesale pharmacies and government institutions or the armed services. The role of pharmacists' assistants is one of providing support to the pharmacist. It is essential that pharmacists' assistants are suitably trained in the functions which form part of their scope of practice.

Pharmacists' assistants perform a wide variety of functions within the various sectors of pharmacy. Two categories of pharmacists' assistants have thus been identified; viz

- Pharmacists' assistants (basic); and
- Pharmacists' assistants (post-basic).

Pharmacists' assistants who are undergoing training prior to registration as a pharmacists' assistant (basic) or pharmacists' assistant (post-basic) will be registered as pharmacists' assistants (learner basic) and pharmacists' assistants (learner post-basic) respectively.

The scope of practice determines the activities, responsibilities and accountability of pharmacists' assistants in the practice setting.

Pharmacists' assistant (basic)

A pharmacists' assistant registered in the category pharmacists' assistant (basic) may perform the following services or acts under the direct personal supervision of a pharmacist in a pharmacy:

(i) the sale of Schedule 1 medicines or scheduled substances;

(ii) assist with the compounding, manipulation or preparation of a non-sterile medicine or scheduled substance according to a formula and standard operating procedures approved by the responsible pharmacist;

(iii) assist with the manufacturing of a non-sterile medicine or scheduled substance according to a formula and standard operating procedures approved by the responsible pharmacist;

(iv) the re-packaging of medicine;
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(v) the distribution and control of stock of Schedule 1 to Schedule 5 medicines or scheduled substances; and

(vi) the provision of information to individuals in order to promote health.

Pharmacist's assistant (learner basic)

A pharmacist's assistant registered in the category pharmacist's assistant (learner basic) may for the purposes of education and training, provide the services or perform the acts prescribed for pharmacist's assistants registered in the category pharmacist's assistant (basic) under the direct personal supervision of a pharmacist in a pharmacy.

Pharmacist's assistant (post-basic)

A pharmacist's assistant registered in the category pharmacist's assistant (post-basic) may perform the following services or acts under the direct personal supervision of a pharmacist in a pharmacy:

(i) the sale of Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 medicines or scheduled substances;

(ii) assist with the compounding, manipulation or preparation of a non-sterile or sterile medicine or scheduled substance according to a formula and standard operating procedures approved by the responsible pharmacist;

(iii) assist with the manufacturing of a non-sterile or sterile medicine or scheduled substance according to a formula and standard operating procedures approved by the responsible pharmacist;

(iv) the re-packaging of medicine;

(v) the distribution and control of stock of Schedule 1 to Schedule 6 medicines or scheduled substances;

(vi) the ordering of medicine and scheduled substances up to and including Schedule 6 according to an instruction of a person authorised in terms of the Medicines Act to purchase or obtain such medicine or scheduled substance;
(vii) the reading and preparation of a prescription, the selection, manipulation or compounding of the medicine, the labelling and supply of the medicine in an appropriate container following the interpretation and evaluation of the prescription by a pharmacist;

(viii) the provision of instructions regarding the correct use of medicine supplied; and

(ix) the provision of information to individuals in order to promote health.

Pharmacist’s assistant registered in the category pharmacist’s assistant (post-basic) may perform the acts or provide services as prescribed as prescribed above as well as the reading and preparation of a prescription, the selection, manipulation or compounding of medicine and the labelling and supply of medicine in an appropriate container under the indirect personal supervision of a pharmacist: provided that such indirect personal supervision will take place only under the following circumstances:

(i) the services are provided or acts are performed at a primary health care clinic or any other facility as approved by council;

(ii) only re-packaged medicines or patient ready packs are provided;

(iii) written and up-dated protocols and standard operating procedures are available describing clearly the responsibility of the pharmacist’s assistant and pharmacist under whose indirect personal supervision the pharmacist’s assistant performs the acts and provides the services; and

(iv) the pharmacist under whose indirect personal supervision the pharmacist’s assistant performs the acts and provides the services visits the pharmacist’s assistant at the primary health care clinic or other facility as approved by council for purposes of supervision and support, which visits must be documented and take place at least once a month.

Pharmacist’s assistant (learner post-basic)

A pharmacist’s assistant registered in the category pharmacist’s assistant (learner post-basic) may for the purposes of education and training, provide or perform the services or acts prescribed for pharmacist’s assistants registered in the category pharmacist’s assistant (post-basic) under the direct personal supervision of a pharmacist in a pharmacy.
The Education Committee of Council considers all applications and each application is considered on merit. After an application has been evaluated the Council may decide, that if the applicant complies with all the requirements he/she may be registered as a pharmacist's assistant in the category basic or post-basic. Candidates may be required to be assessed by a provider approved by Council in order to determine competence prior to registration as a pharmacist's assistant.

A working knowledge of the English language, which is essential for the practice of pharmacy in South Africa, is also necessary prior to registration as a pharmacist's assistant.
DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE FOR REGISTRATION AS A PHARMACIST’S ASSISTANT

The following documents must be submitted to Council for consideration by the Education Committee of Council:

(a) an original letter of confirmation from the institution or examining body where the qualification was obtained stating that the applicant was enrolled as a student and qualified at that institution (submitted directly to Council by the institution);

(b) an original Letter of Good Standing issued by the registering authority of the country in which the qualification was awarded (submitted directly to Council by the institution);

(c) a certified copy of your identity document or passport;

(d) a recent colour photograph of yourself;

(e) a certified copy of your qualification in pharmacy;

(f) a certified copy of proof of current registration in the country in which the qualification was awarded;

(g) a original copy of an evaluation of the qualification from the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) in Pretoria

SAQA may be contacted for evaluation of qualifications at:

Postal Address
Postnet Suite 248
Private Bag X06
WATERKLOOF
145

Physical Address
1067 Arcadia Street
Hatfield
PRETORIA
0083

Tel: (012) 431 5000
Fax: (012) 431 5039
(h) information regarding the **syllabus and curriculum** of the qualification obtained from the institution where training was undertaken;

(i) **certified** copy of **official transcripts** issued by the institution where the qualification was obtained;

(j) a **letter of support of registration with Council** issued by the National Department of Health.

Contact Details:

**Postal Address:**
The Director-General
Department of Health
Private Bag X 828
PRETORIA
0001
Attention: Mr SA Smith
Tel: 27 12 312 0000/0730/0722

(k) **Evaluation fee** of R 849.01 (Incl VAT)
SUMMARY OF THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

1. Obtain the letter of support from the Department of Health;

2. Submit all documentation required by the Education Committee of the South African Pharmacy Council;

3. Await approval from the Committee;

4. Submit to Council the completed contract of employment obtained from the Department of Health and applicable fees for registration as a pharmacist’s assistant;

5. Assume duty as a pharmacist’s assistant.