

PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS

HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Dear Colleague

REFLECTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS ON THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF CPD

Upon our election/nomination to the Professional Board, we undertook to serve you and the profession to the best of our ability within an open, interactive, transparent and constructive framework. We do still abide to and strive for the best possible service we can offer you, and the profession. In this regard, we are all genuinely pleased with the reaction we received recently in correspondence from quite a number of registered professionals regarding the introduction of the new CPD administrative fee. We are most grateful to the great majority who understood the need for this said development and accepted the decision, a decision which was taken having first exhausted all other alternatives and having due consideration to keeping the fee at the lowest possible level. We are equally grateful to those who, although they complained and queried the decision, they nevertheless expressed their appreciation for the work that is being done on their behalf. Such an acknowledgement and expression of appreciation makes life that little bit easier, despite the extra burden we all bear in our work environment. It would have been cost-ineffective to answer the queries we received on an individual basis, hence this explanatory letter for your background, clarification and understanding. The letter addresses ALL queries raised and each query is substantiated with extracts of the decisions of the Board, which have been ratified by the Council, and appropriate motivation, as follows:

1. WHY CPD?

The Act and Regulations

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for **all registered dietitians** became **compulsory on 1 September 2001** in terms of Section 26 of the Health Professions Act (Act no 56 of 1974) "Rules relating to continuing professional development in dietetics" as promulgated in the Government Gazette No. 22577 of 24 August 2001. According to section 26 of the Health Professions Act the HPCSA can delegate general powers to the Professional Boards. The HPCSA delegated the management and implementation of CPD systems to all Professional Boards.

In March 2002 the Professional Board **NOTED** that –

A The multi-disciplinary CPD Committee (an Ad hoc CPD Committee of the HPCSA) in January 2002 **NOTED** a presentation by the Registrar highlighting the following:

- a. The introduction and maintenance of CPD was a given and non-negotiable;
- b. The cost, effectiveness and way forward with regard to CPD programmes had to be determined;
- c. The estimated costs involved for every Professional Board to implement CPD programmes as contained in Council CPD 9 and 10/Jan 2002.

B The Committee then **RESOLVED** that it be recommended to Council that –

- a. it be re-affirmed that CPD programmes be based on a point system and that every Professional Board could decide on the number of points to be required per profession within its ambit;
- b. the implementation of CPD programmes be compulsory for all Professional Boards by 2004;
- d. the charging of a fee to providers for the accreditation process be permissible if a Professional Board functioned as an Accreditor;
- g. Professional Boards to take responsibility for their own costs as it related to CPD.

2. MANAGEMENT OF CPD

2.1 The CPC Committee

In March 2002 the Professional Board **RESOLVED** that –

- i. A Continuing Professional Development Committee be appointed in terms of regulation 2 of the Regulations relating to the Functions and Functioning of Professional Boards;
- ii. The Committee be composed of-
 - a. Three members of the Professional Board;
 - b. Two representatives of the Association for Dietetics in South Africa as the current Accreditor;
- iii. Three members of the Committee would constitute a quorum;
- iv. The committee be authorised within the current policy parameters as determined by the board **to deal with and finalize all matters** relating to continuing professional development in respect of all practitioners registered under the ambit of the Professional Board and to report thereon to the Professional Board.

The Professional Board then FURTHER RESOLVED that the following persons be appointed as members of the Continuing Professional Development Committee of the Professional Board for Dietetics:

Ms G J Gericke (Chairperson); Dr R Blaauw (Ex Officio); Mrs L Koornhof (the then elected President of ADSA acting as the ADSA representative); Prof D Labadarios; Mrs E Wentzel-Viljoen. Since July 2002 Mrs Debbie Marais serves as the ADSA representative. The CPD Committee is thus an official sub-committee of the Professional Board for Dietetics and thus acts in a legal capacity. This was also applicable for the year 2001.

2.2 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the CPD Committee is clearly outlined in the document on "Guidelines for compulsory CPD for Dietitians" (September 2001; see point 5 page 4). This document was mailed to all registered dietitians.

2.3 Appointment of ADSA as the Accreditor

The Professional Board appointed the Association for Dietetics in South Africa (ADSA) in 2000 as the only Accreditor of CPD activities for dietitians. ADSA had been the only applicant. Other organisations/institutions could however be considered for appointment as an accreditor upon application to the Professional Board for Dietetics. (Refer to document on "Guidelines for compulsory CPD for Dietitians", September 2001).

2.4 Functioning of the CPD Committee

The CPD Committee meets once per month telephonically to save money on travelling, (3 to 3½ hours per meeting) to discuss accreditation issues/applications and the further development of the CPD system. The Professional Board for Dietetics pays the telephone account. The Professional Board members and the ADSA representative do not receive **any** remuneration for this service to the members of the dietetic profession.

The CPD Committee members also assess Category 3 activities (for example articles with questions) and make recommendations regarding the acceptability for accreditation. **None** of the Committee members is remunerated for this work.

2.5 Financial management

At a CPD Committee workshop on 26 March 2002 the CPD system was assessed as comprehensively as possible. It was decided to maintain the current system, since the system seems to be efficient and cost-effective, but adopt a revised fee system, which will in the long term save on administration, be equitable and keep costs down. This was decided upon after thorough consideration of our experience over the past two years and having identified the type of activities that induce costs and exert an upward pressure on the necessary fees to cover these costs.

2.6 Refusal to pay administrative fee

In March 2002 the Professional Board then **FURTHER NOTED** the report by the Registrar that –

- i the Professional Board was legally entitled to act against practitioners who failed to comply with the CPD requirements as promulgated in the Rules relating to continuing professional development in dietetics.

3 ADSA AS THE ACCREDITOR

3.1 ADSA CPD Officer

ADSA appointed Edelweiss Wentzel-Viljoen as the CPD Officer responsible for the management of the ADSA CPD Office. The position of the ADSA CPD Officer is **part-time** and the contract is yearly renewed.

3.2 ADSA CPD Office

The ADSA CPD Office is situated on a farm between Bloemhof and Christiana in the North West Province. It is about 230 km from Potchefstroom and 180 km from Kimberley. The office is well equipped with a computer, scanner, e-mail facilities, etc. However, a separate telephone line is not available for the Office.

3.3 Responsibilities

Job description:

All secretarial and administration functions to run an efficient and effective CPD Office.

Responsibilities:

1. Accreditation of CPD activities (Accredit CPD activities for dietitians according to the guidelines; Inform providers of the accreditation; Develop and maintain a database of all activities accredited)
2. CPD database for dietitians (Establish and maintain a database of the CPD points accrued by all dietitians; Issue annually a CPD point status report to dietitians; Update changes to the database)
3. Establishment of communication lines and maintenance of effective communication with the Professional Board for Dietetics, the CPD Manager and Officer of the HPCSA; ADSA Executive committee and/or management committee; Providers of activities and Individual dietitians
4. Prepare the agenda and keep the minutes of the CPD Committee meetings
5. Financial management (Submit a budget annually; Develop and update a fee structure; Development and maintain a bookkeeping system; Invoice Providers of activities according to the approved fee structure; Invoice dietitians according to the approved fee structure; Receive payment from Providers; Receive payment from dietitians)
6. Development of policy and procedure documentation
7. To evaluate applications for deferment and make recommendations to the Professional Board for Dietetics

3.4 Financial management

The ADSA CPD Office runs smoothly and the providers of activities are impressed with the system, indeed they have begun to mimic it, and by far the majority of dietitians are satisfied with the services of and support from this Office. However, the Office needs money to deliver a satisfactory and sustainable service. **Income** is generated from the fees paid over by ADSA, payment by providers for the accreditation of Category 1 and Category 3 activities (articles with questions), processing of the ADSA/VIC activities, selling of labels and payment of the administration fee by individual dietitians. Companies e.g. pharmaceutical companies prefer to sponsor activities themselves by providing the activities directly to dietitians rather than to sponsor the CPD Office.

The main **expenditure** includes the remuneration of the ADSA CPD Officer (based on number of hours monthly as per contract); financial management (chartered accountant); development of management system (licence and service fee for software programme, additional software programmes, meeting expenditures); running of CPD Office (rental of the office, telephone, fax, e-mail, scanner, computer, printer, telephone/fax, printing, stationary, cartridges and photocopies, postage, sundries); payback of ADSA National loan.

Audited books (2001 book year) are available at the CPD office. The auditors' report has served and has been approved by the Professional Board for Dietetics in March 2002. The audited books (2002 book year) will serve before the next Professional Board meeting.

Administration fee payable by all dietitians

In order to cover the running costs of the Office the decision was taken by the CPD committee to introduce an administration/handling fee payable by all dietitians (instead of an individual payment based on the total number of points accrued). This fee covers:

- Accreditation of Category 2 activities (mostly requested by individual dietitians)
- Accreditation of Category 3 activities (excluding articles with questions)
- Answering of questions/queries via e-mail and mail
- Updating of the CPD database for address changes, etc.
- Updating of the CPD database for points accrued by each individual dietitian
- Transferring CPD points to the Professional Board for Dietetics of the HPCSA
- Sending out annual statements to all dietitians regarding their point status.

Lower administration fee for ADSA full members

A brief explanation:

- ADSA National Office pays annually 15% of the full membership fee over to the ADSA CPD Office. (It is important to note that the financial management of the ADSA CPD Office is independent of the ADSA National Office)
- The ADSA CPD Office also receives other "services" from ADSA Executive and ADSA National Office that cannot be calculated in financial terms. These benefits include the following and are shared with ADSA full members: updating of the address database; sending out e-mails on behalf of the CPD Office to all ADSA full members; representing ADSA on the CPD Committee (time and expertise); assessment of articles with questions by the ADSA representative (time and expertise)
- However non-ADSA members also benefit from ADSA CPD initiatives without paying for such activities. For example ADSA act as a 'Provider' of activities: SA Journal of Clinical Nutrition carrying accredited articles that are accessible to all dietitians and the ADSA/VIC articles mailed to all the dietitians.

4 INVOLVEMENT OF THE HPCSA AND THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS

4.1 HPCSA

Please refer to point 1.

4.2 Professional Board for Dietetics

The following table gives the financial outline of the Professional Board since the start of the term of office in May 1999. As can be seen, the actual expenses regarding staff and administrative-related matters exceed 80% of the total expenses of the Board. **The Professional Board has no control over the latter expenses.** The Professional Board is fully aware of the dramatic increase in annual fees, but if we as dietitians value our independence, this is a price that we will have to pay.

Category	1999 Actual figures	2000 Actual figures	2001 Actual figures	2002 Budget
Income				
Fees	R287 149-35	R365 198-77	R406 026-71	R580 114-00
Other	R100 413-93	R66 101-37	R114 309-63	R87 665-80
Total	R387 563-28	R431 300-14	R520 336-34	R667 779-80
Expenses				
Board meetings/evaluations	R116 579-86 (28%)*	R90 399-17 (18%)*	R88 966-32 (17%)*	R182 544-00 (27%)* ♥
Council/staff/admin	R290 896-08 (71%)*	R401 399-57 (82%)*	R424 513-62 (83%)*	R485 040-00 (73%)*
Total	R407 411-88	R491 798-74	R513 479-94	R667 584-00
Balance	-R19 848-60	-R60 498-60	+R6 856-40	+R195-00
		23% increase in fees	5% increase in fees	27% increase in fees

* Percentage of total expenses

♥ This includes the re-payment of the loan to the HPCSA

The Professional Board for Dietetics does not handle **any** money. All finances are managed by the Department of Finances of the HPCSA. The Professional Board only has an input in the budget and in setting the actual annual fees. Further the Board can control to some extent the expenses of the board meetings and evaluations of the training programs.

4.3 Accreditation fees of other accreditors

Each Professional Board approves Accreditors for its own profession. The accreditation system is based on the same principles for example one contact hour is equal to one CPD point, thus cross-accreditation of activities is possible. There are no guidelines for the accreditors regarding the fee charged for accreditation. Accreditation fees charged by other Accreditors approved by the Medical and Dental Board for **category 3 activities per application** are given in the following table.

Accreditor	Fee	Accreditor	Fee
University of Cape Town	R50.00	University of the Free State	R171.00
MASA	R57.00	University of Stellenbosch	R171.00
University of Witwatersrand	R75.00	University of Pretoria	R300.00

This means that when accreditation is requested for any individual activity, for example attendance of an activity not accredited beforehand, publishing of articles, presentations (to health professionals, lay public) the individual practitioner has to pay the mentioned fee **per application**.

5. THE DIETITIAN AND CPD

Please remember that annual fees and expenses incurred in respect of attending CPD activities are tax deductible.

6. HOW CAN YOU HELP

We would indeed value and appreciate your help in keeping costs down. Please remember that, from experience, every time an incomplete form is received devoid of the necessary details, an unnecessary phone call is made, an unnecessary query is submitted, unsubstantiated applications are made which do not conform to the current CPD regulations, all such matters need to be finalized and unwittingly add to the total costs. This by no means implies that you must cease communicating with us, but rather that you can help us keep costs to the minimum by reducing unnecessary and time consuming administration which has to be paid for.

We trust that by sharing with you the management of CPD we have also shed light on the financial management of the running costs of CPD. Should we have not replied to any of your queries, or should any new queries arise, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

DR RENÉ BLAAUW

CHAIRPERSON: PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS (On behalf of the CPD Committee)