



SADA

THE SOUTH AFRICAN
DENTAL ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

TITLE

SADA OBJECTS TO HPCSA ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE INCREASE NOTIFICATION RECEIVED

GAUTENG – 25 March 2021

STATEMENT:

The South African Dental Association is very concerned with the recent decision taken by the HPCSA regarding annual fees. This is a regulatory statutory body and it is compulsory to be registered with the Medical and Dental Board to practice Dentistry in South Africa. Whilst SADA appreciates a reduction from the previously proposed 28% to the announced 15.5%, it still believes that the HPCSA have not taken into sufficient account the pandemic and restrictions to practice which has impacted severely on oral health practitioners. It is for this reason that we have taken the decision to share the latest communication addressed to the HPCSA from SADA.

BOARD NOTICE: HPCSA ANNUAL FEE INCREASES & ANNUAL FEES FOR 2021

We refer to the Board Notice 16 published in the government gazette of 19 March 2021, setting out annual registration fees payable by registered practitioners as from 1 April 2021.

We appreciate the Council having considered our representation and lowering the fees from 28% to 15,5%, this is a far cry from the previous Council and MDB who have not adequately attended to our concerns. We hope that this herald a new era of stakeholder engagement as the past few years it has been rather acrimonious and one sided. However, despite our previous representations made herein, it is noted with great disappointment on behalf of our members, that the Council has still deemed it fit to increase the annual registration fees for dentists by 15.5% which is substantially more than the present CPI of 3.3%.

Whilst the increases may not be at the level of 2020, it is still discriminatory, unfair and unreasonable to impose such a steep increase only on practitioners registered with one Board, namely, the Medical and Dental Professions Board. The decision is exacerbated when one considers that the Council has not seen fit to levy any increases for the remaining practitioners registered with the remaining 11 Professional Boards.

The Council also did not see it fit to explain its position to the constituents of the Board, and the Council chose to ignore previous representations made by us on behalf of our members. The cross subsidisation by the Medical and Dental Professions Board of the remaining 11 Boards is unacceptable and must be rejected.

On behalf of our members, we record our strongest objection to the increase of their annual registration fees.

Many of our members report that their experience of the Council continues to be disappointing, inefficient and failure to carry out its statutory mandate. Our members report amongst others:

1. Their experiences of the Council are riddled with administrative irregularities, poor governance, inability to provide guidance and general inefficiencies.

2. This was evidenced by way of example, the recent inability to consider and register applications from community service dentists sufficiently in time, with the result that the Council was forced to extend their registration period.
3. The Council's failure to appoint CEO/Registrar for extraordinary periods of time with the present incumbent acting in a temporary capacity.
4. Inability of the Council to manage a sound relationship with stakeholders and to direct and oversee service delivery processes.
5. Our members also note continued failure to perform to the required standard in some of the key functions, including management of registration and records, resources, human resources, and stakeholder relations.
6. Our members complain of mismanagement, maladministration, and irregularities in the professional conduct assessment system where legal services continued to show complete disregard for the gravity of the consequences for practitioners who facing charges and unable to finalise them sufficiently in time.
7. The Council continues to adopt an adversarial approach rather than a health professional approach towards its constituents that is required by its mandate. There are clearly insufficient health professionals to guide the health professions in its legal unit. Members are thus unable to obtain advice and speak to the correct individuals in the employ of the Council.
8. The profession refuses to be made responsible financially for the inefficiencies of the Conduct Committees' investigation into professional conduct cases and resultant backlogs. The costs of conducting these cases must have been budgeted for in the past years as well.

The profession rejects the continued cross-subsidisation model of other 11 Professional Boards by the Medical and Dental Professions Board. In particular, our members object to the Medical and Dental Board being made responsible for subsidising smaller Boards or those Boards that have experienced a drop in registered practitioners. These events require a very close examination of operating expenses and budgets on the part of the Council.

Our members reject the above-inflation increases for 2021, at a time when many practitioners are facing dire hardships caused by and continue to be caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The entire dental fraternity is facing some form of financial ruin with many practitioners reporting to us that they will not be able to cover their practice costs and may have to consider closing.

We are urgently requesting the Council to reconsider and review its decision with regard to dentists and look forward to hearing from you. We would welcome a meeting with the council or MDB to discuss this very sore situation.

Ends

Release date: 26th March 2021

About SADA:

The South African Dental Association (SADA) is the peak national body for the dental profession in South Africa representing the large majority of active registered dentists, both in the public and private sectors in South Africa. It is a non-profit professional association with voluntary membership organisation represented by a total of 11 branches, one in every province of the Republic of South Africa, with Gauteng and Eastern Cape provinces having two branches each. The Association represents the interests of both the oral health profession and its members in South Africa.

The Association is committed and engaged in processes relating to setting industry standards and formulating policies. Learn more about SADA at <https://www.sada.co.za>

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