



Dear member,

Facebook post

Management recently was informed by one of our members of a Facebook post that referred to the professional body as 'not legal'. This wrong conception sometimes lead to discrimination against our members which is unnecessary. In order to set the record straight we will post the following correction on Facebook. We thought that it could also be helpful for you as counsellor to have such a document.

“ASCHP and CCSA counsellors 'not legal' in Nina Anne Striglia's post” this is simply not true, but a misconception. Here are the facts:

The CCSA management met with the HPCSA council in 2014 to discuss their intention to establish a professional body for community counsellors, especially where the public has no access to health professionals or simply cannot afford psychological counselling services. The CCSA submitted the scope of practice to the HPCSA and as there was no valid objection, the ASCHP as professional body came about and was formally recognized by SAQA as a PB (ID 984) for supportive counsellors in 2015 with designations listed on the NQF and

published in the Government Gazette (in terms of provisions made in the National Qualifications Act 67 of 2008). In the words of Mr Joe Samuels (SAQA CEO) “The recognition of PB will contribute to strengthening social responsiveness and accountability within the professions and promoting pride in association for all profession.”

Community counselling is also listed on the Organizational Framework for Occupations (OFO) of the QCTO (Quality Council for Trades and Occupations) as a recognized occupation in South Africa and the HW SETA accordingly instituted counselling skills programmes in order to provide skills training opportunities to community counsellors. I think that the purpose and rationale for such a qualification provides an apt description of the nature and work of so-called community counsellors:

[The FET] Counselling Qualification has been developed to meet the needs of learners in a variety of counselling contexts. It should develop learners who know their scope of practice, behave ethically in a counselling context, conform to minimum standards, know when to refer clients and understand the psychological consequences for clients if counsellors are inadequately trained or overstep their scope of practice. It is a generic Qualification that is intended for community or workplace-based counsellors who work in structured and supervised environments including, but not limited to private and government Institutions, schools, Non-Governmental Organisations including Faith Based, Community Based and Not-for-Profit Organisations, the South African Police Service, Counselling Call Centres, Hospitals, Clinics and Support Agencies, Sports Centres, Education and Training facilities, Health and Emergency services and facilities.

Our counsellors thus work as skilled supportive counsellors and do not pretend to be “little psychologists”. They counsel in the wellness domain in terms of WHO policies that support holistic strategies. They do not diagnose or treat, but enhance overall wellbeing and as such are aware that they are obliged to refer clients to a healthcare professional when deemed necessary. Our counsellors

are also expected to complete annual CPD training and we further constantly encourage counsellors to upgrade their qualifications. Members are subject to a strict ethical code and disciplinary measures.

I do trust that this overview will provide the necessary clarity and hopefully also inspire more appreciation for our counsellors who work mostly as volunteers. We are indeed proud of our counsellors who doing a great contribution in communities to help people solve problems and cope with daily challenges, which is especially of importance in the current South African society.'

Skills training qualification

We are also glad to announce that the HW SETA has recently implemented a new RPL policy that provides access for counsellors with relevant experience of at least 5 years to gain access to an accredited skills training qualification. For this purpose we have partnered with ABA Health (registered provider) and we have sent two of our staff members to do an advanced RPL practitioner course. Recognition of Prior Learning or RPL is a process of evaluation by which an assessor determines your entrance level for studies. The policy making provision for RPL states that a qualification may be obtained in whole, or in part, by recognizing informal, non-formal and formal learning and work experience. This means that any applicable skills that you may have required by way of attending short courses, practicing skills or self-study can be taken into consideration for awarding credits for a specific learning programme.

We want to invite any of our members who deem themselves in this category, to contact us for more information on how we can assist you to gain an accredited skills training qualification.

Feedback

Thank you all who have given us positive and constructive feedback on the January circular. Some members have requested more practical 'know-how'

CPD training in the future to which we will definitely attend.

Wishing all our members to be personally well and professionally successful.

Kind regards

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CEO

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