# **BOARD NOTICE 756 2025**

# **SOUTH AFRICAN PHARMACY COUNCIL**

COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR A SPECIALIST PHARMACIST WHO PROVIDES PUBLIC HEALTH PHARMACY AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Pharmacy Council hereby publishes for implementation the Competency standards for a specialist pharmacist who provides public health pharmacy and management services in South Africa, in terms of Sections 33(o) of the Pharmacy Act, 53 of 1974.

# **SCHEDULE**

(a) Competency standards for a specialist pharmacist who provides public health pharmacy and management services in South Africa

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# COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR A SPECIALIST PHARMACIST WHO PROVIDES PUBLIC HEALTH PHARMACY AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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### **ACRONYMS**

The following acronyms have been included; however, the list is not exhaustive-

**GPP** Good Pharmacy Practice.

GXP Good Practice Guidelines and Regulations e.g., Good Manufacturing Practice

(GMP), Good Laboratory Practice (GLP), Good Wholesaling Practice (GWP) and Good Radiopharmacy Practice (GRPP) and other pharmaceutical

practices.

HTA Health Technology Assessment

OMR Outcomes Measurement and Reporting

# **DEFINITIONS**

'Public health' is defined as the science and art of promoting and protecting health and well-being, preventing ill health and prolonging life through the organised efforts of society.

'Public health pharmacy' and 'pharmaceutical public health' are commonly used terms to describe the role or involvement of the pharmacist in public health. Pharmaceutical public health has been defined as the application of pharmaceutical knowledge, skills and resources to the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, promoting, protecting, and improving health for all through organised efforts of society.

"Specialist pharmacist student" means a pharmacist who is registered as such in terms of the Pharmacy Act 53 of 1974 (the Act).

"Specialist pharmacist resident" means a pharmacist who is registered as such in terms of the Pharmacy Act 53 of 1974 (the Act).

"Specialist pharmacist" means a pharmacist who is registered as such in terms of the Pharmacy Act 53 of 1974 (the Act);

"Speciality" means a specialist qualification in one of the fields of pharmacy approved and published in rules made by Council; and

**"Public Health and Management Pharmacist" means** a pharmacist registered with the Council to offer public health pharmacy and management services.

## INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation (WHO) explicitly states that public health refers to all organised measures, whether public or private, to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life amongst the population.

**Public health activities** are therefore aimed at improving health for entire populations and not only individual patients or a particular disease. The WHO and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society identified three main public health functions or domains. The pharmacy profession has a role to play across all three:

(a) Health protection which entails the assessment and monitoring of the health of communities and populations at risk to identify health problems and priorities. This includes infectious diseases, environmental hazards and emergency preparedness.

- (b) Health service delivery and quality, including service planning, efficiency, audit, evaluation, and the formulation of public policies designed to solve identified local and national health problems and priorities.
- (c) Health improvement, which includes health promotion and disease prevention services, to ensure that all populations have access to appropriate and cost-effective care.

Pharmaceutical public health focuses on the development of pharmacy services and expertise to enhance the health and well-being of a whole population. This definition does not, however, cover all the key aspects and potential roles of pharmacists in public health, categorised previously as micro and macro-level activities. *Micro-level activities focus on individual health promotion and disease prevention services, while macro-level activities comprise population-wide approaches, including policy formulation, planning and management functions.* 

The specialist qualification in public health pharmacy and management will predominantly be appropriate for pharmacists involved in macro-level activities in the public and private sectors.

A public health and management pharmacist is a pharmacist registered with Council and who plays a key role in the assessment and monitoring of the health of a community or the general population. They formulate public health policies which address identified health problems and health improvement needs including health promotion and disease prevention. Therefore, a public health and management pharmacist can specialise *inter alia* in public health promotion, disease prevention, policy formulation, planning and management in public and private healthcare sectors.

The purpose of this professional master's degree is to extend the public health and pharmacy management competencies of pharmacists to become specialists in the field of public health pharmacy and management, apply their expertise in this field and add value to the provision of pharmaceutical services within the health system. Completing this qualification will enable specialist pharmacists to contribute to public health outcomes and the management of pharmaceutical services. The degree is inherently practice-based with a large component of work-integrated learning.

# **BACKGROUND**

In 2018, the South African Pharmacy Council published Competency Standards for Pharmacists. Competency standards have been developed and used as the basis for pharmacy education and practice since 2006. These competency standards are developed to encompass the scope of practice for a public health and management pharmacist as a specialist pharmacist.

# SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR A PUBLIC HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT PHARMACIST

In addition to the acts and services which form part of the scope of practice of the pharmacist as prescribed in terms of Regulations 3 and 4 of the Regulations relating to the practice of Pharmacy; a pharmacist who has completed a master's degree in public health pharmacy and management must be allowed to provide the following services or acts pertaining to the scope of practice for public health pharmacy and management pharmacist:

- (a) Perform acts and services especially pertaining to the profession of a pharmacist;
- (b) Lead and manage surveillance and assessment of the pharmaceutical services;

- (c) Lead projects to protect and promote health and well-being, including communicable disease control and environmental health;
- (d) Manage, analyse, and interpret information and statistics;
- (e) Develop and analyse pharmaceutical public health policy for the better use of existing and new medicines/technologies and rational use of all medicines to improve health services;
- (f) Provide strategic leadership for medicine supply management;
- (g) Provide education and training related to public health and management;
- (h) Manage knowledge and transfer research evidence into practice;
- (i) Develop policies and procedures for public health and management;
- (j) Manage, analyse, interpret, and advise on pharmacoeconomic information for rational use of medicines; and
- (k) Perform research, teach, and publish in the field of public health and management.

The scope of practice of a specialist pharmacist student is the same as the scope of practice of a specialist pharmacist practiced under the auspices of a provider.

The scope of practice of a specialist pharmacist resident is the same as the scope of practice of a specialist pharmacist practiced under the supervision of a specialist pharmacist.

# RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR A PUBLIC HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT PHARMACIST

There is a need in South Africa to have specialist public health and management pharmacists in line with the progressive need for an additional role in pharmacy, which is the delivery of pharmaceutical services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the community.

The training of these specialist pharmacists is aligned with the health needs of the population of the country and will contribute to the better management of pharmaceutical services. This specialist pharmacist will have the necessary skills and expertise to implement public health standards and management principles in the delivery of pharmaceutical services.

Public health and management pharmacists are required to understand and apply knowledge of epidemiology and biostatistics in disease prevention, health promotion, healthcare delivery and policy development.

The competency standards have been developed to encompass the changes and developments including new technologies, work processes, changes in legislation and international trends, primarily to ensure the promotion of good public health policies and practices.

# REGISTRATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT PHARMACISTS

Public health and management pharmacists are obliged to be registered with Council for the purposes of offering the acts related to their scope of practice as follows:

(a) Specialist pharmacist student;

- (b) Specialist pharmacist resident; and
- (c) Specialist pharmacist.

# QUALIFICATIONS OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT PHARMACISTS

For purposes of registration as public health and management pharmacists, the qualification shall be-

- (a) a professional Master's degree in public health pharmacy and management as determined by Council and published from time to time, or
- (b) a qualification deemed to be equivalent or higher than the professional master's degree in public health pharmacy and management as assessed by Council.

# STRUCTURE OF THE COMPETENCY STANDARDS AND DOMAINS

A competency framework consisting of six (6) domains suitable for the South African context was developed, together with several associated competencies. A domain represents an organised cluster of competencies within a framework and the domains, with associated competencies, are summarised in Table 1. The behavioural statements indicating how individuals working within the competency framework should behave in practice have also been drafted.

# TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HEALTH PHARMACY AND MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY STANDARDS

DOMAIN	COMPETENCY STANDARD
1. Public health	<ul> <li>1.1 Health Systems.</li> <li>1.2 Epidemiology and Biostatistics.</li> <li>1.3 Policy development, implementation, and management.</li> <li>1.4 Health promotion and disease prevention.</li> <li>1.5 Disaster management.</li> </ul>
Safe and rational use of medicine and medical devices	<ul> <li>2.1 Pharmacoeconomics.</li> <li>2.2 Formulary development.</li> <li>2.3 Rational Medicines and medical devices utilisation.</li> <li>2.4 Medicines and medical devices safety.</li> <li>2.5 Outcomes Measurement and Reporting (OMR).</li> <li>2.6 Pharmacovigilance.</li> </ul>
Supply of medicines and medical devices	<ul><li>3.1 Supply chain management.</li><li>3.2 Medicine dispensing.</li><li>3.3 Medicine disposal/destruction.</li></ul>
Organisation and management skills	<ul> <li>4.1 Human Resources Management.</li> <li>4.2 Financial Management.</li> <li>4.3 Pharmaceutical infrastructure management.</li> <li>4.4 Quality assurance and management.</li> </ul>
5. Professional and personal practice	<ul> <li>5.1 Patient-centred care.</li> <li>5.2 Professional practice.</li> <li>5.3 Ethical and legal practice.</li> <li>5.4 Continuing professional development.</li> <li>5.5 Leadership.</li> <li>5.6 Collaborative practice.</li> </ul>
6. Education, training, and research	6.1 Practice embedded education or workplace education. 6.2 Research.

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# **DOMAIN 1: PUBLIC HEALTH**

# INTRODUCTION

Domain 1 covers public health which is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. It can be described as the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This can be achieved by promoting healthy lifestyles, treating disease, preventing injuries, and detecting, preventing, and responding to infectious diseases. Public health and management pharmacists implement educational programmes, develop policies, deliver services, and conduct research. A large part of public health is promoting healthcare equity, quality and accessibility. The public health domain competencies are:

- 1.1 Health Systems;
- 1.2 Epidemiology and Biostatistics;
- 1.3 Policy development, implementation and management;
- 1.4 Health promotion and disease prevention; and
- 1.5 Disaster management.

DOMAIN 1: PUBLIC HEALTH		
COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIOURAL STATEMENTS	
1.1 Health systems	1.1.1 Critically explore and analyse health systems.	
	1.1.2 Optimise pharmaceutical services within the health system.	
	1.1.3 Identify and understand the pharmaceutical and health needs of the community and population.	
	1.1.4 Develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of pharmacy interventions and services to improve and protect community and population health.	
	1.1.5 Monitor and evaluate health systems for the delivery of pharmaceutical services.	
	1.1.6 Advocate for public health equity.	
	1.1.7 Provide high-quality public health services to improve health and help reduce health inequalities in the	
	population.	
	1.1.8 Apply strategic management and provide leadership in the design of public health projects to promote community health.	
1.2 Epidemiology and biostatistics	1.2.1 Apply the principles and methods of epidemiology in public health.	
	1.2.2 Appraise the effectiveness and efficiency of healthcare delivery using epidemiological data.	
	1.2.3 Design appropriate studies and surveillance tools to determine causes of death, disease, disability, prognosis, prevention, and the evaluation of therapy in a particular community in the planning and design of health programmes.	
	1.2.4 Apply key biostatistical concepts and methods to summarise, display, evaluate and interpret medical and healthcare data.	
	1.2.5 Conduct surveillance and assessment of the public's health and well-being to:	
	1.2.5.1 understand the health needs of the local population to be able to plan healthcare and public health programmes.	
	1.2.5.2 identify who is and who is not accessing pharmacy services.	
	1.2.5.3 demonstrate how pharmacy services are improving health outcomes.	
	1.2.5.4 demonstrate how pharmacy services are improving the health and well-being of the community.  1.2.5.5 demonstrate how pharmacy services are improving access to public health services.	
	1.2.6 Demonstrate the ability to maintain surveillance records.	
	1.2.7 Develop reporting systems to determine whether pharmaceutical services are in accordance with the burden	
	of disease.	
1.3 Policy development, implementation, and	1.3.1 Identify, analyse and evaluate the main determinants of health for potential implementation into health policy and health services.	
management	1.3.2 Influence the development and support of the implementation of antimicrobial guidelines and policies to reduce antimicrobial resistance.	
	1.3.3 Participate in and lead the formulation and implementation of national health and medicines policy and	
	guidelines, including practising at the organisational level.	
	1.3.4 Evaluate reports and develop interventions to improve formularies and guidelines.	
	1.3.5 Explain and evaluate the application of the pharmaceutical policy process at the relevant levels of pharmaceutical service delivery.	

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# DOMAIN 2: SAFE AND RATIONAL USE OF MEDICINE AND MEDICAL DEVICES

# **INTRODUCTION**

Public health pharmacy and management pharmacists must ensure that members of the public receive medicines and medical devices that are appropriate to their health needs. The competencies included in this domain are:

- Pharmacoeconomics;
- Formulary development;
- Rational medicines and medical devices use;
- Medicines and medical devices safety;
- Outcomes measurement and reporting (OMR); and
- Pharmacovigilance.

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# **DOMAIN 3: SUPPLY OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES**

# **INTRODUCTION**

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The public health and management pharmacist plays an important role in the planning and coordination of all activities involved in sourcing, procurement, and logistics management of medicines and medical devices.

The supply of medicines and medical devices competencies are:

- Supply chain management;
- Medicine dispensing; and
- Medicine disposal/destruction.

DOMAIN 3: SUPPLY OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES		
COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIOURAL STATEMENTS	
3.1 Supply chain management	<ul> <li>3.1.1 Participate in the coordination and distribution of medicines and essential resources for population-based control measures during communicable disease outbreaks, epidemics, pandemics, or other similar scenarios.</li> <li>3.1.2 Design tools to monitor and evaluate the pharmaceutical supply chain system and provide feedback to relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>3.1.3 Analyse and implement the framework and components of pharmaceutical supply systems.</li> <li>3.1.4 Utilise data systems for decision-making and to ensure the availability of pharmaceuticals.</li> <li>3.1.5 Appraise and apply good financial management principles to ensure a continuous supply of pharmaceuticals.</li> <li>3.1.6 Demonstrate the ability to manage and develop human resources for effective supply of pharmaceuticals.</li> <li>3.1.7 Demonstrate the ability to implement a quality and risk management programme for effective pharmaceutical supply and use.</li> </ul>	
3.2 Medicine dispensing	<ul> <li>3.2.1 Advocate for appropriate pharmaceutical care plans for implementation.</li> <li>3.2.2 Demonstrate the ability to formulate and implement medicine treatment plans for individual patients.</li> </ul>	
3.3 Medicine disposal/destruction	3.3.1 Develop and implement policies for the safe disposal/destruction of medicines.	

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# **DOMAIN 4: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

# **INTRODUCTION**

Domain 4 includes competency standards that relate to the way public health and management pharmacists apply organisational and managerial skills to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of pharmaceutical services. It includes behavioural statements relating to the operation and maintenance of facilities and the application of sound fiscal principles to ensure sustainable pharmaceutical services that are adaptive to changing environments.

The organisation and management competencies are:

- Human resources management; 4.1
- 4.2 Financial management;
- Pharmaceutical infrastructure management; and 4.3
- Quality assurance and management. 4.4

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# **DOMAIN 5: PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL PRACTICE**

# **INTRODUCTION**

This domain relates to the practice of pharmacy in a professional, legal and ethical manner to manage and deliver pharmaceutical services in a multidisciplinary setting.

The competencies required in Domain 5 ensure good personal and professional practice and they are:

- Patient-centred care; 5.1
- Professional practice;
- Ethical and legal practice;
- Continuing professional development;
- Leadership; and
- Collaborative practice.

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DOMAIN 5: PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL PRACTICE		
COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIOURAL STATEMENTS	
5.6 Collaborative practice	<ul> <li>5.6.1 Provide evidence-based services, advice and information on health and well-being interventions to all healthcare professionals and other stakeholders.</li> <li>5.6.2 Work collaboratively with other healthcare professionals.</li> <li>5.6.3 Advocate for the inclusion of pharmacists in all multidisciplinary healthcare teams.</li> </ul>	

# **DOMAIN 6: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH**

# INTRODUCTION

Education is essential for the development of pharmacists and is required throughout a pharmacist's career to maintain currency on knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. Public health and management pharmacists should participate in the education and training of patients, pharmacy personnel and other healthcare practitioners. These pharmacists should also participate in research, which may include topics within the public health and pharmaceutical management areas.

The competencies required in the domain are:

- 6.1 Practice embedded education or workplace education
- 6.2 Research.

DOMAIN 6: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH			
COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIOURAL STATEMENTS		
6.1 Practice embedded education or workplace education	6.1.1 Demonstrate the ability to impart knowledge and skills needed to support patients and the public in improving and protecting their health.		
·	6.1.2 Demonstrate the ability to provide technical coaching, support, and training to the pharmacy staff and other health care professionals.		
	6.1.3 Demonstrate the ability to develop, implement and maintain the record for training and assessment of healthcare teams, patients, and the public.		
6.2 Research	6.2.1 Encourage pharmacy staff to engage in public health research projects.		
	6.2.2 Obtain ethical and other relevant approvals to conduct research projects.		
	6.2.3 Conduct a public health and/or pharmaceutical management research project in accordance with established research methodology and ethics, as well as GxP where necessary.		
	6.2.4 Support research or evaluation of public health interventions, for example by providing relevant data.		
	6.2.5 Present research/evaluation at a conference or publish it in a peer-reviewed journal.		
	6.2.6 Critically evaluate information sources, literature and research on medicines and practices in terms of evidence for decision-making and implementation in practice.		
	6.2.7 Apply the principles of research methodology in the development of a research protocol and obtain ethical clearance.		
	6.2.8 Analyse data, interpret findings and/or results and formulate conclusions and recommendations.		
	6.2.9 Write and submit a technical report, manuscript for publication or minor dissertation.		
	6.2.10 Lead a multidisciplinary research team.		