



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

STATEMENT ON 40TH MEETING OF PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORK

12 August 2020

The Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work (PBCYC) held its 40th meeting on 29 June 2020 on a virtual platform. The meeting focused on the strategic matters related to the core mandate of the Professional Board.

Since the announcement of the lockdown, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the board noted it that Council's secretariat had adjusted its operations in order to continue rendering services to clients. The office is operating on skeleton staff in line with the directive to have one-third (18 staff members) in the office, and the other members of staff are working remotely. However, clients are still prohibited to come to the office because of the peak of COVID-19 infections. Until Level 1 alert, Council will continue to have one- third of staff rotating. Council services can be reached through telephone or emails.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all quality assurance activities with institutions of higher learning have been postponed. The secretariat will investigate whether it is possible to do virtual support to universities. The Professional Board further decided that virtual roadshows need to continue in order to remain in touch with the sector, and more details will be shared on communication platforms once dates are scheduled.

The Professional Board took note of the progress in the registration of child and youth care workers. In the previous meeting held on 27 February 2020, the board noted that a total of 8917 child and youth care workers are registered. As of 29 June 2020, 9219 child and youth care workers had been registered (91 child and youth care workers at professional level, 7376 at auxiliary level, 1547 child and youth care workers at FET colleges and 205 child and youth care students at universities).

An update from the Council meeting was presented and it was reported that Council had, in its April meeting, approved the document 'Generic processes and tools for child and youth care work practice with individual children and families'. This will be branded and uploaded on the website soon.

The slow progress with training institutions offering the tertiary child and youth care qualification was raised as a concern. The University of Johannesburg (UJ) was approached by the PBCYC to offer child and youth care qualification on distance online learning. The university is looking forward to meet with PBCYC to further explore this project.

The secretariat acted on the recommendation from the Professional Board to engage with the sector for purposes of marketing the child and youth care work profession, and explaining the profession to them. A first round table where universities and departments were invited was held through a virtual platform on 22 June 2020. However not all departments invited attended the round table. Two further dialogues are scheduled to take place with universities that are offering Youth Development or Youth Studies and another one with departments to find out if there is a demand and whether indeed they want to be recognised within the existing Professional Boards or whether they wish to establish themselves as a stand-alone emerging occupation in line with what the Social Service Practitioners (SSP) Bill is proposing.

The PBCYC appreciated the close relationship established by Council with the Minister of Social Development. It was reported that Council had started to impress the need to escalate visibility of child and youth care work in other government departments, and will seek support from the Minister to unlock opportunities in that regard. Council is having dialogues of this nature with the Ministry to make sure that there is an improved way in which child and youth care workers can be employed. Council is hoping that the Minister, through her cluster, would be able to assist Council in setting up meetings with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) as issues around salary disparities and recognition requires a strategy from the Department of Social Development as they are responsible for advocating on behalf of Council in terms of staff the establishment.

The Professional Board concluded its 40th meeting by expressing appreciation to the members and the secretariat for a fruitful virtual meeting and wished everyone strength during this period.

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ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/ Council) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978 (the Act). Council has two professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. Council, in conjunction with its two professional boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration; education and training; professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with professional standards. It protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with Council in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practising social work and child and youth care work. Registration is mandatory for social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, student social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers, student child and youth care workers, and student auxiliary child and youth care workers.