

## Healthcare practitioners face erasure for non-payment of annual fees

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Thousands of healthcare practitioners registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) could face erasure from the register at the end of the month for failing to pay their annual fees.

Nearly 12 000 practitioners (including doctors, dentists, occupational therapists, psychologists, optometrists, emergency care practitioners and many other) have not yet paid their annual fees and they risk being scrapped from the HPCSA's role of practitioners. Health care practitioners registered with the Council are expected to pay their annual fees by 1 April every year to allow them to retain their registration status.

Under the Health Professions Act of 1974, registration with the HPCSA is a prerequisite to practice any of the professions under the jurisdiction of the Council. And practising without Council registration is criminal in terms of the Act.

In terms of the Act, erasures can take place within three months after the deadline. Once erased from the register for non payment of annual fees, practitioners who pay within six months will pay a penalty fee of twice the annual fee as well as the outstanding fees. Those who apply for restoration after six months from the day of erasure will pay a hefty fee which is ten times the usual annual fee plus the outstanding amount.

"Practitioners are reminded annually of the amount they must pay as well as the due date. We realise that the penalty fees prescribed in the Act are quite high and have allowed them a grace period of three months to get their accounts up to date. Some of our practitioners are unemployed or are not currently practising which is why there is a provision in the Act to apply for voluntary erasure to avoid paying the hefty penalty fees in such circumstances," said HPCSA Registrar, Adv Boyce Mkhize

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## awards & grants for members

### Joyce Runnalls Memorial Trust Fund

It is the aim of the fund that any grants given be used in a field related to and for the benefit of oncology including:

1. All aspects of oncology and the cancer patient;
2. The advancement of radiotherapy;
3. Assistance for attending oncology or postgraduate courses/congresses/seminars/visits to other radiotherapy research/oncology centres.

For further information on the Joyce Runnalls Memorial Trust Fund including application forms please contact the Administrative Office of the Society.

Note the successful applicant will be required to publish and/or present a paper at a suitable radiographers' congress/seminar. Applications for the fund must reach the Administrative Office by 30 June each year.

### Tyco Healthcare Award

The aim of the award is to confer on the recipient a grant for the professional advancement in any field of radiography. The award is available to persons with suitable qualifications registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and who are members in good standing with the Society of Radiographers of SA.

Application forms, obtainable from regional branches and/or the Administrative Office of the Society must be returned to the latter on or before 30 June each year.

Applications will be considered by the Executive Committee, who will submit motivations to National Council. Successful candidates will be required to submit a paper for publication in *The South African Radiographer* and to present a paper on their subject at a meeting of radiographers and to fulfil any other criteria stipulated by the sponsor.

### The Education Fund

#### Guidelines for the use of the Education Fund

The aim of the National Education Fund is to encourage members to attain further qualifications for the purpose of professional advancement in any category of radiography. Education bursaries are available to persons with suitable qualifications registered at the Health Professions Council of South Africa and who have been paid full (ordinary) members of the Society of Radiographers of South Africa for at least three years. The following courses can be considered:

1. Higher qualifications in radiography, for example: Higher National Diploma; Honours; B Tech; Masters in Radiography (e.g. M Tech).
2. Recognised teaching qualifications through either a technikon or university.
3. Technikon or university short course for which a certificate is awarded.
4. Informal courses, providing they have direct relevance to the practice of radiography.
5. Attendance at seminars and congresses.

### Application procedure

All applications must be completed on the Education Fund application form to reach the Administrative Office: Society of Radiographer of SA, P O Box 6014, Roggebaai 8012 before 30 June each year. All applications will be screened by both Branch Education Representatives and the National Council Education Representative for approval by the Executive Committee who will submit recommendations to National Council at its next meeting. The bursary will be paid upon proof of successful completion of the course and the names of successful applicants will be published in *The South African Radiographer* on receipt of the required proof. The total amount available for awards will be derived from the interest of the capital investment only. The amount awarded per application is at the discretion of National Council, and will depend on the number of applications and type of course, namely up to a maximum of R500 per application for categories 1 to 3, and up to a maximum of R250 for categories 4 and 5.

### Note:

Application forms are available from regional branches. Since the Education Fund is intended for use by full members, the Society actively encourages all regional branches to make available bursaries for students studying for their first qualification.