



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ADDENDUM TO THE PRESIDENTIAL JOBS SUMMIT FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

Partnership to address health imperatives

Nursing

Note: This is a Business proposal that is supported by other Social Partners on condition that after the Jobs Summit, a revised proposal which includes the estimated costs and financial contribution by the private sector will be tabled for engagement. This engagement will include the roles of the private and public sectors in the implementation of the proposal.

Programme description

South Africa faces a significant shortage of nursing healthcare professionals. Yet, the various categories of unemployed nurses exacerbates the national crisis of high unemployment. It impedes the provision of and access to quality healthcare services across South Africa and poses an impediment to successful envisaged delivery of the National Health Insurance (NHI).

Currently initiatives in the training of nurses are fragmented which results in inefficiencies in the system. Social partners agreed that it would be valuable to mobilize the private and public healthcare sector to partner with each other to address this chronic shortage of qualified auxiliary, staff, registered and professional nurses in South Africa. By so doing, these stakeholders will provide enable capacitation of the national healthcare system while equally creating job opportunities for virtually 50 000 youths.



This agreement is premised on the assumption that a collective effort at collaborative alignment and co-accountability for the output between the Department of Health, the private sector and the various professional and educational bodies can result in a positive and significant impact on the employment levels of currently unemployed, aspirational and caring individuals and significantly influence the access to quality of care.

Areas of intervention

Social Partners have identified three broad areas that require intervention:

- The first category relates to a pool of qualified Registered Nurses that were funded by provincial departments through a bursary scheme but could not be placed due to unavailability of funded posts (Kelly, 2016);
- The second category relates to a much larger pool of newly qualified Enrolled Nurses (ENs) and Enrolled Nursing Assistants (ENAs). The survey conducted by the South African Nursing Council (2015) indicates that 63.93% of ENAs and 57.09% of ENs that qualified in the 2013 and 2014 periods remain unemployed. It is important to note that this survey was based on a sample of 10 000 students with a response rate of 30% but nonetheless affirms a concerning growth of unemployment amongst newly qualified nurses,
- The third category of unemployed “qualified” nurses is more complex to quantify as it relates to students who were trained by private nursing colleges, some of which are neither registered nor accredited (Health and Welfare Seta, 2016; Mkhize, Dr, 2016).

Social partners agreed to establish a senior, appropriately authorised project team, comprising of representation from all key stakeholders which should include:

- Department of Health (DoH) representatives, including the Chief Nursing Officer and the Human Resource Development Director;
- South African Nursing Council (SANC);
- Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA);
- Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET);
- Council for Higher Education (CHE);
- Established private Nursing Education Institutions (NEI); and
- Other nursing education institutions and universities.

It was agreed that the project team should be fully authorised to investigate and develop a detailed and practical proposal, with strict delivery timetables, based on student output and employment of individuals. This team should be of appropriate size, expertise and experience to be agile, committed and accountable to the common aim. This analysis will include, but not be limited to:



- Evaluating the current status of all sectors of education and training of nurses
- Establish reliable benchmark data regarding real nursing vacancies.

The project team should be tasked with developing simplified, efficient, low cost processes between various bodies which will need to include agreements on the following key points:

- Streamlining accreditation of institutions and the new nursing programmes to ensure timeous delivery of training;
- Large scale, full accreditation and registration of institutions and programmes with a standardised curriculum per programme e.g. enrolled nursing assistant, staff nurse and registered and professional nurse for each NEI to use which would minimise the requirement of each NEI having to develop and apply for accreditation;
- Extension of currently accredited clinical and education facilities for an extended transitional period to achieve the output required;
- Funding of fees and registration costs;
- Agreement that 'new' qualifications will be trained;
- Scope of Practice for all occupations to be promulgated and published;

The project team will also need to agree certain detailed logistical items including; recruitment and selection processes; identification of clinical facilities and support needed to meet education and training requirements; employee benefits and salary levels, employment policies etc.; and education and training materials and a standardised funding model (infrastructure, students and staff) amongst other activities.

Supporting projects

A six pronged approach is proposed and includes:

- Up-skilling of the currently unemployed Enrolled Nurses towards a Registered Nurse via the 2 year Bridging Programme;
- Provide education for entrants onto the Higher Certificate: Auxiliary Nursing (NQF 5) to specifically meet the demand.
- Provide education for entrants onto the 3 year Diploma in Nursing: Staff Nurse (NQF6);
- Provide education for entrants into the 4 year bachelor's degree in nursing and midwifery (NQF8);
- Provide opportunity to train non-nursing categories such as the Operating Department Assistant (ODA) in a three year Diploma; and
- Exploring possible partnerships to get the unemployed Registered Nurses who were awarded bursaries by the provincial departments into employment.

Whilst it appears that much work still needs to be put in place, there is already substantial infrastructure in place and there are numerous organisations that have for some time been attempting to achieve various elements of the proposed plan, although in an uncoordinated and fragmented fashion.



