

MEDICAL AND DENTAL PRACTITIONERS COUNCIL OF ZIMBABWE**POLICY ON INTERNATIONAL TELEMEDICINE****Background**

The Medical and Dental Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe (MDPCZ) is tasked with the legal responsibility of ensuring adequate patient care through amongst other things appropriate licensing and regulation of doctors. The advanced technological developments have led to the practice of medicine across country borders and licensing jurisdictions through the use of internet connectivity. The MDPCZ is a founder member of both the International and Sub-Saharan Medical Regulatory Authorities which both observe inter-alia the ethical and legal implications of the risks of telemedicine. Patient safety and accountability are the bedrock of good medical practice and one of the fundamental functions of the Council. Section 30(1)(a) of the Health Professions Act (Chapter 27:19) refers.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of the Policy is to provide the requirements for practitioners residing outside the borders of Zimbabwe wishing to practice telemedicine in Zimbabwe.

PROPOSED TELEMEDICINE POLICY

Section 1:

- (a) requirements that must be met to practise telemedicine in any special purpose of practice:
- (i) Registration with the MDPCZ is valid for a period of 12 months subject to renewal.
- the practitioner should apply for registration with the Council to provide telemedicine services for Zimbabwean patients;
 - the application should be accompanied by
 - certified copies of professional qualifications
 - original Certificate of Good Standing from the official regulatory body that the applicant is currently practising;
 - an appropriate application fee;
 - recent testimonials from professional colleagues that the practitioner is currently practising with.
 - personal submission of the original qualifications upon registration with the MDPCZ.

Section 2

(b) Employment requirements

- The practitioner must be employed by an overseas facility that has a contract with a health provider in Zimbabwe

- The practitioner must ensure that they have the qualifications, training and experience to carry out the specific procedures the health provider requires with their specific clinical setting.
- The practitioner must have been in active clinical practice (at least 20 hours per week) for at least 2 out the 3 years in the relevant scope of practice.
- Patients' rights must be observed.
- The Zimbabwean health provider must provide to the MDPCZ :
 - ❖ Dispute resolution process to ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, simply, quickly and efficiently. This process must
 - Include automatic notification to be given to the regulatory authorities in both Zimbabwe that and the home country of the respective practitioner
 - Allow and assist with an external review and investigation by those same authorities
 - Include an agreement to fund you to travel to Zimbabwe if an investigation is necessary
- The practitioner is required to participate in the continuing professional development (CPD) throughout the period of registration with the MDPCZ;

(c) Supervision requirements

- The practitioner's supervision must be provided by the Clinical Director of the Zimbabwean Health Facility employing him.
- The supervisor must provide details of the level of responsibility to be delegated to the practitioner.
- The practitioner's supervisor must provide an induction/orientation and supervision plan for the practitioner that includes:
 - Details of how the practitioner will be supervised, how often the practitioner will meet with the supervisor and the supervisor's availability by telephone and/or email.
 - Details of how the practitioner will be audited- an audit must be carried out by the supervisor for 30 consecutive cases, to coincide with the first 3-monthly supervision report on the practitioner. Note: The practitioner or the supervisor should contact the respective Zimbabwean CPD accrediting body about the ongoing CPD requirements.
- Supervision reports need to be provided to MDPCZ after every 3 months. The reports must include details of audits undertaken by your supervisor.

Reapplying for registration

The requirements vary depending on when the practitioner was last registered in this scope of practice. If the practitioner wants to continue to practice immediately following expiry of current practising certificate, or within 12 months of certificate expiring, the practitioner needs to provide the following:

- an updated job offer or evidence of continued employment for a further 12 month period (or less if applicable)
- an updated supervision plan
- a logbook
- any other audit requirements the respective professional association may require
- satisfactory quarterly supervision reports from the Clinical Director of the health facility for the time the practitioner was previously registered with MDPCZ.

sources

A handwritten signature in blue ink, followed by the date '19/6/15' written vertically.