



CMSA

The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa NPC

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JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

EXAMINATIONS & CREDENTIALS

November 2022

REGULATIONS

FOR ADMISSION TO THE DIPLOMA IN CHILD HEALTH OF THE COLLEGE OF PAEDIATRICIANS OF SOUTH AFRICA

DCH(SA)

1.0 Background and motivation for this diploma:

A large proportion of the burden of disease and death is borne by the child population in South Africa. While undergraduate medical curricula throughout the country are being transformed to take account of the public health realities in the country the extent of undergraduate training in paediatrics and child health is constrained by the other demands of the curriculum. On the other hand, for many practitioners, the option of a four-year paediatric specialist training programme is neither feasible, nor appropriate to the needs of child health in the general population

An intermediate qualification in this field therefore provides the opportunity for accredited competence in child health

2.0 Goal:

The goal of the Diploma in Child Health is to encourage postgraduate training and raise the standards of practice in child health and disease, giving special emphasis to preventive paediatrics and to the methods and sources available to help vulnerable or disabled children to achieve their optimum potential

3.0 ASSUMPTIONS OF LEARNING ALREADY IN PLACE BEFORE THE PROGRAMME LEADING TO THE QUALIFICATION IS COMMENCED

3.1 An undergraduate medical degree

3.2 A minimum of four months of clinical practice in the field of paediatrics and child health

4.0 EDUCATIONAL AIM / PURPOSE OF THE DIPLOMA

4.1 Increase standards of practice in child health and disease:

4.1.1 Acquisition of problem-solving skills in the field of paediatrics and child health

4.1.2 Ability to identify, manage and treat common childhood illnesses

4.1.3 Ability to request and interpret special investigations appropriate to the condition and the level of care

4.1.4 Ability to recognise child health problems requiring further referral

4.1.5 Improve competence in the practice and promotion of child health and preventive paediatrics

4.1.6 Strengthen community child health methods and sources available to support marginal groups of children to achieve their optimum potential

5.0 TARGET GROUPS

- 5.1 The Diploma would be of value to general practitioners, medical officers, school medical officers, clinic and local authority doctors, child psychiatrists and others interested in community and family health

6.0 ADMISSION AS A CANDIDATE TO THE EXAMINATION

(to be read in conjunction with the Instructions)

6.1 Qualification:

6.1.1 **Registration requirements:**

The candidate must be registered or registrable with the Health Professions Council of South Africa

Before being admitted to **write** the examination for the DCH(SA), the candidate must:

6.1.1.1 hold a registrable primary qualification;

6.1.1.2 have completed her/his internship;

6.1.1.3 **Either¹**

have completed at least six months of full-time training (which may include internship training) in paediatrics under the direct supervision of a registered Paediatrician (on-site):

Or

have completed less than six months of full-time training (which may include internship training) under the direct supervision of a Paediatrician, with additional training taking place at a District level hospital under the indirect supervision of a District Clinical Specialist Paediatrician or Regional Paediatrician via Outreach.

Note: The candidate will require two months of indirect supervision to equate to one month of direct supervision.

Example A:

A doctor completes four months of Paediatrics in Internship under direct supervision of a Paediatrician. To make up the balance of the six months in a District Hospital under indirect supervision, the doctor will need to perform four months.

Example B:

A doctor completes three months of Paediatrics in Internship under the direct supervision of a Paediatrician. To make up the balance of the six months in a District Hospital under indirect supervision, the doctor will need to perform six months.

6.1.1.4 The letter in Appendix A must be completed by the supervisor(s) confirming the paediatric experience.

6.1.1.5 Time spent in Paediatrics at a non-South African hospital may be recognised towards time required for DCH eligibility – this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

7.0 SYLLABUS OF THE EXAMINATION

See guidelines to candidates - <https://www.cmsa.co.za>

8.0 CONDUCT OF THE EXAMINATION

8.1 Preparation for examination:

Most academic centres in South Africa convene a course of lectures and clinical demonstrations on aspects of the curriculum

These courses are run on a part-time basis, thus enabling access by prospective candidates who are in fulltime employment

8.2 Examination:

Candidates are examined with a view to deciding whether they have knowledge and insight into the special problems of childhood:

8.2.1 A written examination comprising TWO papers each containing multiple choice questions (MCQs).

8.2.2 Each MCQ paper will have 75 questions.

8.2.3 Each MCQ paper will be of 3 hours duration.

8.2.4 A single mark will be awarded for the 150 MCQs combined.

8.2.5 All questions will be single best response (A-type) MCQs.

8.2.6 The MCQ papers will be published in English only

- 8.2.7 The pass mark for the examination will be determined using a Cohen multiplier plus 1 standard error of measurement applied to the mark obtained by the student at the 90th centile. Negative marking will not apply to the MCQ examination and there will be no 'correction for guessing' formula applied. Candidates are therefore encouraged to answer all items in the test.
- 8.2.8 An objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) with six stations
The following marks (%) will be awarded for each of the stations as well as the judgement points

Category	Clear Pass	Bare Pass	Bare Fail	Clear Fail	Unacceptable
%	55-100	50	45	30-40	< 30
Judgement points	4	3	2	1	0

Candidates showing unacceptable/unprofessional behaviour will have judgment point of 0.
Candidates who have a performance less than 30% will also a judgement point of 0.
Total of six stations equally weighted amounting to six Judgements
A Pass mark is a judgement score of ≥ 18 reflecting an overall minimal performance of 50%

This translates to the following

- The candidate must have a minimum judgement score of **18**
 - The candidate may 'Clearly Fail' one station but must pass the other stations with at least two 'Clear Passes'
 - The candidate may 'Barely Fail' two stations but must pass the other stations with at least two 'Clear Passes'
 - The candidate can 'Clearly Fail' one station, 'Barely Fail' another station but needs to have 'Clear passes' in three of the four remaining cases.
- 8.2.9 The following was agreed at the CMSA Senate meeting of 30 October 2019: THAT if a candidate passes the written component of a Diploma examination, but fails the oral/clinical/OSCE/OSPE/practical component, they will be permitted to redo the oral/clinical/OSCE/OSPE/practical component only at the next set of examinations without having to rewrite the written component. This carry over of the written component results will only be permitted once, and only for the oral/clinical/OSCE/OSPE/practical examination directly following the failed examination.²

Appendix A

DIPLOMA IN CHILD HEALTH APPLICATION SUPPORTING LETTER³

Candidate

Name		
HPCSA Registration Number		
Hospital(s) where paediatric experience acquired	Name	Dates
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

Supervising Paediatrician(s)

Name			
HPCSA Registration Number			
Hospital/ Facility currently working			
Hospital where supervision of the candidate took place			
Dates of Direct Supervision (<i>i.e. paediatrician and candidate both employed on site at the same hospital/Paediatric Department</i>)			
Number of Months of Direct Supervision			
Dates of Indirect Supervision (<i>i. e. Paediatrician provided off site support and supervision to the candidate through Outreach or DCST support</i>)			
Number of Months of Indirect Supervision			
Signature			
Date Signed			

Note: The equivalent of 6 months directly supervised or 12 months indirectly supervised paediatric time is required in order to be eligible to attempt the Diploma in Child Health. Each two months of indirectly supervised paediatric time is considered equivalent to one month of directly supervised time.

9.0 ADMISSION AS A DIPLOMATE

9.1 The candidate having passed the examination and having been admitted as a Diplomate in Child Health of the Colleges of Paediatricians of South Africa, will be asked to sign a declaration, as under:

I, the undersigned, do solemnly and sincerely declare

that while a member of the CMSA I will at all times do all within my power to promote the objects of the CMSA and uphold the dignity of the CMSA and its members

that I will observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, By-laws, Regulations and Code of Ethics of the CMSA as in force from time to time

that I will obey every lawful summons issued by order of the Senate of the said CMSA, having no reasonable excuse to the contrary

and I make this solemn declaration faithfully promising to adhere to its terms

Signed at this..... day of

..... 20

Signature

Witness

(who must be a Founder, Associate Founder, Fellow, Member, Diplomate or Commissioner of Oaths)

9.2 A two-thirds majority of members of the CMSA Senate present at the relevant meeting shall be necessary for the award to any candidate of a Diploma

9.3 A Diplomate shall be entitled to the appropriate form of certificate under the seal of the CMSA

9.4 In the event of a candidate not being awarded the Diploma (after having passed the examination) the examination fee shall be refunded in full

9.5 The first annual subscription is due one year after registration (statements are rendered annually)