

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT****NOTICE 555 OF 2021****VETERINARY AND PARA-VETERINARY PROFESSIONS ACT, 1982, AS AMENDED  
ACT No. 19 OF 1982, AS AMENDED****AMENDMENT OF THE RULES RELATING TO THE PRACTISING OF PARA-VETERINARY  
PROFESSION OF VETERINARY NURSE – COMMENTS INVITED**

The South African Veterinary Council, with the approval of the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform & Rural Development, intends to amend the rules for the para-veterinary profession of veterinary nurse by revoking the rules published in Gazette number 18313, GNR.1445, on 17 May 1991 (as amended), with the following Schedule hereby published for public comments. All interested parties who have any comments to the proposed amendments are called upon to submit such comments to the SAVC: Director Legal Affairs within thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this Notice to: Mrs D Stoltz at e-mail address [director.legalaffairs@savc.org.za](mailto:director.legalaffairs@savc.org.za) (Telephone number (012) 345-6360/083-632-3904), with a copy to [legalsecretary@savc.org.za](mailto:legalsecretary@savc.org.za).

**SCHEDULE****1. Definitions**

Any word or expression in this Schedule to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act shall have that meaning, and "the Act" means Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, 1982 (Act No. 19 of 1982), and the regulations made thereunder:

**"collaboration"** means that a veterinary nurse may open a veterinary nursing facility, and from that facility render the services set out in rule 2(2), subject to the following conditions:

- i) That the veterinary nurse enters into a written agreement with one or more veterinary professionals separately, indicating that that veterinary professional or group of professionals will refer patients to, or work in consultation with, the said veterinary nurse on an ad hoc basis;
- ii) The agreement must contain details of:
  - how often and in what format the veterinary nurse would report back to the veterinary professional regarding the patient's progress;
  - how instructions regarding the patient's care and/or treatment will be given to the veterinary nurse by the veterinary professional; and
  - how emergencies which may occur during the treatment will be dealt with; and
- iii) The agreement must further contain an undertaking that no fee (money or in kind) is payable in respect of any referral in terms of the agreement.

**"impairment"** means such a level of physical or mental impairment, which includes substance abuse or addiction, that may affect the practice of the veterinary nurse to such an extent that the welfare of the patient/s, the interest of a client and/or the image of the profession may be compromised;

“**Medicines Act**” means the Medicines and Related Substances Control Act, 1965, Act No.101 of 1965, as amended from time to time;

“**medicine**” means a medicine or veterinary medicine as defined in section 1 of the Medicines Act;

“**professional identification device**” means any form of identification approved by the council, including epaulettes, worn by a veterinary nurse which identifies the veterinary nurse as such;

“**sample**” refers to a subset, for example collecting whole blood specimens from 10 animals from a group of 100 would constitute a sample;

“**specimen**” refers to a single subject (for example a single blood collection tube containing whole blood);

“**red flags**” means warning signs that suggest that referral back to the relevant veterinarian is warranted. Some of the warning signs may include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Unexplained changes in bodyweight;
- (ii) Loss of appetite or inappetence;
- (iii) Any change in demeanour and/or mentation;
- (iv) New clinical signs unrelated to the condition under treatment;
- (v) Respiratory distress - tachypnoea, respiratory effort, cyanosis;
- (vi) Cardiovascular distress- tachycardia, hypotension, pale mucous membrane [MM], slow or rapid capillary refill time (CRT);
- (vii) Patient not responding to therapy as expected;
- (viii) Unexplained pain or discomfort; and
- (ix) Suspected zoonoses and/or contagious diseases.

“**supervision**” means, unless otherwise indicated:

“**direct supervision**” means that the veterinary nurse receives instructions from a person registered to practice a veterinary profession, within his/her scope of practice and carries out the instructions in that person’s presence provided that the person gives the veterinary nurse and the patient, his/her undivided attention; and

“**indirect supervision**” means that the veterinary nurse receives written or verbal instructions, within his/her scope of practice, from a person registered to practice a veterinary profession, and carries out the instructions while the registered veterinary professional need not be on the premises where professional services are being rendered, but must be readily available by telephone or some other form of communication and assume responsibility for the veterinary services given to the patient or services rendered by a person working under his/her direction.

“**unprofessional conduct**” means unprofessional, dishonourable or unworthy conduct as set out in rule 4;

“**veterinary nursing facility**” means a facility registered with Council from which a veterinary nurse

may render services in accordance with rule 2(1) for own account and which complies with the minimum standards.

## 2. SERVICES PERTAINING SPECIALLY TO THE PROFESSION OF VETERINARY NURSES

### General Services

- (1) For the purposes of the Act the following services shall be deemed to be services, which pertain specially to the para-veterinary profession of veterinary nurse that may be performed outside the scope of a veterinary practice; They may be performed from a veterinary nurse's registered facility without direct or indirect veterinary supervision, but on referral from or in consultation with the patient's veterinarian, or from a registered veterinary facility under the direct or indirect supervision of a veterinarian:
- (a) Basic animal care including but not limited to, the clipping of nails and beaks in birds, the clipping of nails in dogs and cats, husbandry, feeding and hygiene;
  - (b) Urinary catheterisation of male and female companion animals, if no sedation is required;
  - (c) Collection of blood specimens for monitoring purposes, if no sedation is required;
  - (d) The administration of medicines per os, intranasally, into the eye or ear, and by injection subcutaneously, intramuscularly, intravenously, intraperitoneally to patients, as provided and prescribed by the referring veterinary professional;
  - (e) Vaccinations, limited to the signing of a vaccination record;
  - (f) Maintenance of all equipment used, including compliance with all health and safety requirements;
  - (g) Supervision of animals giving birth and caring for new-born animals, including assisting to alleviate basic dystocia;
  - (h) Semen collection;
  - (i) Lancing of abscesses, follow up wound care, placing of dressings and bandages, including Robert Jones and modified Robert Jones bandages;
  - (j) The taking of specimens and samples for the diagnosis by a veterinarian of Brucellosis in animals and the testing of animals for Tuberculosis by means of the intradermal tuberculin test, including interpretation of the test, provided that the veterinary nurse has passed a relevant course accredited by the Department of Agriculture;
  - (k) The administration of enemas, if no sedation is required;
  - (l) Animal behaviour consultations; and
  - (m) Physical rehabilitation, limited to acute phase and post-operative care.
- (2) For the purposes of the Act the following services shall be deemed to be services, which pertain specially to the Para-Veterinary profession of Veterinary Nurse that may only be rendered under the direct or indirect supervision of a veterinarian, at a registered veterinary facility:
- (a) Professional dental scaling and polishing, as well as simple extractions under direct supervision of a veterinarian;

- (b) The administration of pre-medication and the induction, maintenance and monitoring of anaesthesia, including local anaesthesia (excluding nerve blocks and epidurals), under supervision of a veterinarian;
  - (c) The collection and preparation of specimens within a veterinary nurse's scope of practise, including skin scraping, the collection of urine by means of cystocentesis and catheterisation of male and female companion animals and production animals, the collection of blood and vaginal smears, impression smears and sheath washing in bulls, including skin punch biopsies and superficial fine needle aspirates;
  - (d) The examination, recording and reporting findings to a veterinarian of specimens and samples, including haematology and blood chemistry, urine examination, stool examination, skin and scraping examinations, rumen fluid examination and examinations in which the Woods lamp is used;
  - (e) The correct taking and developing of radiographs with permanent identification which includes the identity of the animal and owner, practise identity, date and indication of left and right, assistance with diagnostic imaging, maintenance of diagnostic imaging apparatus and record keeping (Imaging logbook shall be kept listing the identity of the animal and owner, numerical number, exposure figures and anatomical position) of diagnostic imaging; The use of self-adhesive labels for the identification of radiographs is not permissible;—Other diagnostic imaging modalities like CT, MRI and nuclear scintigraphy under supervision;
  - (f) The passing of stomach -, naso-oesophageal –naso-gastric and oesophagostomy tubes;
  - (g) Intravenous catheter placement and the infusion of fluids and blood including the collection of blood for transfusion;
  - (h) Placement of central lines under direct supervision of a veterinarian;
  - (i) Intra-cardiac injection for euthanasia, provided that it may only be performed on a heavily sedated, anaesthetised or comatose patient as a last resort;
  - (j) Superficial suturing and placing of drains;
  - (k) Cat castrations under direct supervision of a veterinarian;
  - (l) Dispensing of medicines in accordance with relevant legislation, provided that any schedule 1 and higher medicine may only be dispensed on direct instruction of a veterinarian;
  - (m) Maintenance of equipment including but not limited to anaesthetic machines, imaging equipment, sterilisation equipment and any other specialised equipment, including all health and safety aspects/requirements;
  - (n) Assisting a person registered to practice a veterinary profession with surgical procedures; and a veterinary nurse may also assist a person practising a veterinary profession with any other service, which such person may perform if such assistance is rendered under supervision or direct continuous supervision of that person.
- (3) A veterinary nurse shall perform the services referred to in rule 2(2) only during the course of his or her employment or under contract by—
- (a) a person registered to practise a veterinary profession; or
  - (b) a person employing a person registered to practise a Veterinary profession.
- (4) In a case of emergency, a veterinary nurse may also render other services which fall within his or her scope of training and experience and which are essential to save lives or relieve suffering in animals, on condition that a report thereon is made to the person referred to

in rule 2.3 as soon as possible and the further treatment of such animal is entrusted to him or her or another person registered to practise a veterinary profession.

### 3. EXCEPTION IN RESPECT OF RULE 2

Rule 2 must not be construed in a manner so as to prohibit any other person registered to practise a Veterinary or Para-veterinary profession from performing procedures that pertain to their profession.

### 4. CONDUCT OF PERSONS PRACTISING VETERINARY NURSING PROFESSION

#### General principles

- (1) A veterinary nurse must base his/her personal and professional conduct thereon that he/she is a member of a learned and honourable profession and is required to act at all times in such a manner as to maintain and promote the prestige, honour, dignity and interests of the profession and of the persons by whom it is practised.
- (2) All persons practising the veterinary nursing profession are working towards the same common good cause, whether they are self-employed or in the service of an employer, and they must co-operate with each other and with the authorities concerned to promote that cause.
- (3) The fundamental responsibilities of a veterinary nurse are to save lives, to relieve suffering and to promote the health of animals.
- (4) A veterinary nurse must at all times maintain the highest standard of nursing care and professional conduct.
- (5) As a professional a veterinary nurse is required to comply with the following fundamental principles:
  - (a) **Integrity:** To be honest and ethical.
  - (b) **Professional Competence:**
    - (i) To maintain the professional knowledge and skill required to ensure that a client receives competent professional services based on current developments in veterinary nursing techniques and to act diligently and in accordance with applicable technical and professional standards benchmarked against what is expected of the reasonable veterinary nurse considering the circumstances and geographic and demographic realities at hand;
    - (ii) To comply with continuing professional development (CPD), which enables a veterinary nurse to develop and maintain the capabilities to perform competently within the professional environment; and/or
    - (iii) To keep record of CPD credits obtained to ensure CPD requirements are met to ensure that registration with Council is maintained.
  - (c) **Confidentiality:** To respect the confidentiality of information acquired as a result of professional services and the relationships emanating therefrom, and, therefore,

not disclose any such information to third parties without proper and specific authority, unless there is a legal or professional right or duty to disclose, nor use the information for the personal advantage of the veterinary nurse or third parties, other than those implied by rule 3(3).

- (d) **Professional conduct includes, but is not limited to:**
- (i) To be informed and comply with all the legal directives which are relevant to the practice of his/her profession and which include the Act, its regulations and Rules, the current Ethical Code, as well as all other relevant legislation;
  - (ii) To avoid any action that the veterinary nurse knows or ought to have known that may discredit the profession;
  - (iii) To be morally obliged to serve the public to the best of his/her ability and in the light of acceptable scientific knowledge and procedures;
  - (iv) To refrain from expressing criticism through which the reputation, status or practise of a colleague in the profession is or could be undermined;
  - (v) Not to permit himself/herself to be exploited in a manner which may be detrimental to the client, the patient, the public or the profession;
  - (vi) If the veterinary nurse is the principal of a facility, ensure that the place at or from which a person practises veterinary nursing is registered with Council, and complies with the applicable minimum standards for that category of facility;
  - (vii) The principal of a registered facility must inform the Council within thirty (30) days of any changes to the identity or address of the principal; if the principal should pass away, Council should immediately be informed.
  - (viii) A veterinary nurse must inform Council within thirty (30) days of entering into employment or partnership at another registered facility.
  - (ix) To apply for an extension of registration should it be required that procedures outside the scope of practise of a veterinary nurse, e.g. epidurals and nerve blocks, be performed.
- (e) **“Unprofessional conduct”** is unprofessional, dishonourable or unworthy conduct on the part of a veterinary nurse, including, *inter alia*, the following acts and omissions:
- i) Failure to comply with the Act, the regulations and/or Rules promulgated under the said Act, and/or the Code of Conduct and/or guidelines issued by Council from time to time;
  - ii) A contravention of the provisions of the Medicines Act and/or the regulations promulgated under it;
  - iii) Failure to comply with any other relevant legislation;
  - iv) Performing professional services outside the scope of registration, performing professional services in the absence of veterinary collaboration or referral, except as provided for in these rules, which constitutes very serious unprofessional conduct, which if found guilty, may lead to removal from the register;
  - v) Failure to act in accordance with the responsible veterinarian's instructions;
  - vi) Failing to adequately supervise his/her staff;

- vii) Failure to provide an itemised account when requested to, within the period set out in Rule 7(3), should the services be rendered from a registered nursing facility;
- viii) Treating a client in a disrespectful and/or discourteous manner, unless justifiable reasons exist;
- ix) Incompetence, gross negligence or any form of negligence in the practising of the para-veterinary profession of veterinary nursing;
- x) Fraud or dishonesty in making any kind of application to Council or in charging for a test that was not performed or for services not rendered;
- xi) Falsifying and/or backdating any laboratory report or other report in part or in full;
- xii) In any way directly or indirectly assisting, allowing or enabling an unqualified person and/or unregistered person to perform professional work which by law only a (veterinarian and/or a) para-veterinary professional is allowed to perform;
- xiii) Referring work, the performance of which is reserved by law to a veterinarian, specialist veterinarian or para-veterinary professional to a person not registered with Council;
- xiv) Non-payment after demand of any fee, levy or other charge payable to Council;
- xv) Failure to comply with an order, requirement, request, sentence or sanction of the Council and/ or the Registrar or any official appointed by the Council or the Registrar to perform any function in furtherance of the Council's objectives;
- xvi) Failure to submit to an inspection of a veterinary nursing facility required by Council where the veterinary nurse is the principal of said veterinary nursing facility;
- xvii) Operating a veterinary nursing facility which is not registered or does not comply with the minimum standards set out in the Rules;
- xviii) Practising outside the scope of practice of a veterinary nurse;
- xix) Failure to advise Council of any change in his/her physical residential or employment address, and other contact details, within thirty (30) days of such change being effected;
- xx) Being convicted of being involved in any criminal or illegal activity, if it relates to the practising of the para-veterinary nursing profession or is deemed to bring the profession into disrepute;
- xxi) Permitting himself/herself to be exploited in a manner which may be detrimental to the client, the patient, the public or the profession, or allow bias, conflict of interest or influence of others, to compromise professional judgment;
- xxii) Failing to cooperate, obstructing or delaying an investigation into unprofessional conduct by Council;
- xxiii) Contempt and/or disrespect of Council; and
- xxiv) Any other conduct which in the opinion of Council constitutes unprofessional conduct.

## **5. Acceptance and payment of commission for services rendered in accordance with rule 2(1)**

- (1) Subject to Rule 5(2) a veterinary nurse may not –
- (a) Accept any commission from any person as a consideration for referrals of any clients by such veterinary nurse to such person;
  - (b) Charge or accept any fee for the same service from both the referring veterinarian and the owner of the animal.
  - (c) Share with any person, fees charged for a service unless -
    - (i) Such sharing is commensurate with the extent of such other person's participation in the rendering of the service concerned; or
    - (ii) He/she is a partner, shareholder or employee.
- (2) The provisions of Rule 5(1) shall not be so construed as to prohibit a veterinary nurse -
- (a) From introducing a loyalty scheme at a particular facility, provided that the loyalty scheme, including discount, does not include the payment of money;
  - (b) From paying to a debt collection agency any commission in respect of debts which are collected by such agency on his/her behalf; or
  - (c) From accepting any royalty or similar compensation in respect of an article or product to which he/she holds the patent rights.

## **6. Covering**

- (1) A veterinary nurse may not enter into a partnership or allow any shareholding or interest in his/her practice with another person, unless that person is registered with Council as a veterinary professional or para-veterinary professional.
- (2) A veterinary nurse may:
- (a) Offer an appointment in his/her practice to another veterinary professional or para-veterinary professional who is registered in terms of the Act to practice the profession concerned;
  - (b) Employ another person in a professional capacity at his/her facility; or
  - (c) Share his/her facility or premises with another person involved in practising a veterinary or para-veterinary profession.
- (3) Any appointment, employment or sharing anticipated in Rule 6(2) is subject to the condition that:
- (a) Ethical work principles and confidentiality of client records are not compromised; and
  - (b) Sufficient bio-security measures, according to relevant health and safety legislation and including isolation facilities, are in place to ensure that the wellbeing of humans and animals are not at risk.

## **7. Fees for services rendered in accordance with rule 2(1)**



- (1) A veterinary nurse must inform the client in charge of an animal in respect of which a service is to be rendered of the approximate fee which he/she intends to charge for such service:
- (2) Fees for standard procedures may be advertised in the reception area, in which event an estimate of fees need not be given to the client.
- (3) Any veterinary nurse claiming payment from a person in respect of any service rendered by him/her must furnish such person with an itemised account as soon as possible but not later than 30 days after the service was rendered.

#### **8. Intrusion**

- (1) If a veterinary nurse has obtained any confidential information regarding the nature and extent of the business or facility of a veterinary professional or colleague in the veterinary nursing profession, such veterinary nurse may not use such information to promote his/her own business or facility.
- (2) If a veterinary nurse renders professional services to an employer, he/she may not use his/her association with or the intellectual property of such employer in any manner whatsoever to promote his/her own business or facility at the expense of that employer in the profession.
- (3) Contravention of Rules 8(1) & 8(2) for own gain is a serious offence which may lead to deregistration.

#### **9. Advertising for services rendered in accordance with rule 2(1)**

- (1) A veterinary nurse may advertise his/her services, facilities, products and prices or permit another person to do so without limitation on the size, format, artistic or literary style: Provided that the advertisement complies with the provisions of these Rules and may in no way compromise or impair any of the following, namely: -
  - (a) The client's freedom to consult a facility of his/her choice; and
  - (b) The good reputation of the veterinary nursing para- profession.
- (2) All advertising by a veterinary nurse of his/her para-veterinary services must be in good taste with regard to content, prominence and medium and may not be offensive to any cultural, religious or linguistic community or be contrary to the spirit of the Code of Conduct of the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa and the Code of Conduct of Practise issued by the Council.
- (3) Advertisements may not -
  - (a) Be misleading in any respect;
  - (b) Compare the quality of services, products, the standards of facilities and/or the knowledge or expertise of a veterinary nurse with that of another veterinary nurse or the veterinary nursing para- profession generally, nor may it claim to be superior in any respect; or
  - (c) Criticise the quality of services or products provided by another veterinary nurse or person registered with the Council.

#### **10. Identification of veterinary nursing facilities**

- (1) A veterinary nursing facility must be identified by means of an identification board,
- (2) An identification board referred to in Rule 10(1) must contain at least the following –
  - (a) Identify the facility as a veterinary nursing facility;
  - (b) Hours of operation;
  - (c) A telephone number of the veterinary nursing facility;
- (3) A veterinary nursing facility may be identified by means of a direction board, which must comply with the provincial or municipal regulations governing direction boards.

## 11. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR VETERINARY NURSING FACILITIES

- (1) A veterinary nursing facility at or from which a veterinary nurse practises must –
  - (a) Be a permanent structure (This is not intended to exclude buildings, which are factory produced and site assembled, e.g., a prefabricated building as the word “permanent” relates to the materials used and not to the building itself);
  - (b) Have a good source of general lightning;
  - (c) Have adequate ventilation;
  - (d) Be compliant with local regulations pertaining to health and safety, including fire protection;
  - (e) Have facilities for the disposal of veterinary waste according to local government requirements;
  - (f) Drainage and washing water according to local authority requirements;
  - (g) Be so constructed as to minimize the escape of an animal and to ensure the effective and safe and comfortable confinement of animals at all times;
  - (h) Have equipment to determine the weight of patients adequately; and
  - (i) Be registered with Council.
- (2) Subject to any requirements of a local or other authority, a veterinary nursing facility must consist of:
  - (a) A reception and office area;
  - (b) A waiting room for clients with access to toilet facilities; and
  - (c) One or more consulting rooms.
- (3) The internal walls and floor surfaces, shelves and tables of a veterinary nursing facility must be of such a nature that they can be properly cleansed and disinfected so that hygienic conditions can be maintained.
- (4) The drainage and washing water of a veterinary nursing facility must run into an adequate sewer and comply with the requirements of local authorities.
- (5) The veterinary nursing facility must have a direct public entrance.
- (6) Provision must be made at a veterinary nursing facility for a hygienic, insect and rodent free environment within the facility as well as where therapeutic and nutritional products are stored.
- (7) Adequate facilities must be available for the preparation for food and washing and cleaning of all equipment.
- (8) A veterinary nursing facility must have access to relevant reference material.
- (9) A veterinary nursing facility must have the necessary facilities and/or equipment in order to ensure that a basic physical examination can be performed.

- (10) If a dispensary service is rendered, it may only consist of medicines scheduled as a schedule 0 in terms of the Medicines and Related Substances Act, Act 101 of 1965 and stock remedies registered under the Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act, Act 36 of 1947; Medicines and stock remedies must be stored in accordance with relevant legislation.
- (11) A veterinary nursing facility must have suitable equipment, or access thereto, for the effective sterilisation of relevant equipment.
- (12) If patients are kept overnight the following must be adhered to:
  - a) A separate cage of adequate size must be available for each patient;
  - b) Cages must be constructed of such a material so as to prevent self-injury of the patient;
  - c) The veterinary nursing facility must have proper means to identify each patient; and
  - d) The veterinary nursing facility must be adequately ventilated and, if necessary, heated or cooled.
- (13) Animals hospitalised overnight must be adequately monitored having due regard to the animal's condition. If such monitoring is not available, the client should be informed accordingly.
- (14) A veterinary nursing facility must have an area in which patients can be exercised indoors or outdoors, which must be designed and constructed in a manner that will minimise escape and facilitate the maintenance of hygiene.

## **12. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR MOBILE ANIMAL SERVICES**

### **Mobile animal services for veterinary nurses practicing from a registered physical veterinary nursing facility**

- (1) If a mobile nursing service is rendered, it must:
  - (a) Function as an integral part of the registered physical veterinary nursing facility to visit clients;
  - (b) Be operated by a registered veterinary nurse; and
  - (c) Comply with the requirements of adequate record keeping.
- (2) A service delivery vehicle must comply with the following structural and procedural requirements where applicable, the vehicle must:
  - (a) Have a cold storage system that can maintain approximately 5°C for the transport and storing of all biological products;
  - (b) Have equipment for the disposal or collection of all waste including carcasses, if required;
  - (c) Carry an appropriate range of medicines, equipment and protective clothing, according to the type of service and species serviced, in a manner that is consistent with professional standards, while ensuring occupational safety and bio-security; and
  - (d) Have access to a means of communication to contact the base facility, if required.

## **13. Records at veterinary nursing facility**

- (1) The veterinary nurse must maintain records, for each animal or group of animals which are legible, accurate and permit prompt retrieval, if and when necessary.
- (2) Records must contain the following information for individual animals as applicable:
  - (a) The date or period of the examination or consultation;
  - (b) Name of the veterinarian who treated the patient and the referral letter;
  - (c) Client's identification;
  - (d) Patient name, other forms of identification, as well as the species, breed, gender and age;
  - (e) Clinical information for the purposes of continuous care and assessment;
  - (f) Vaccination record;
  - (g) Special procedures;
  - (h) Problem attended to and/or diagnosis made by the attending veterinarian;
  - (i) Treatment and scripts issued by the veterinarian; and
  - (j) Discharge instructions.
- (3) All records referred to in Rule 14(2) must be retained by the principal of the veterinary nursing facility for a period of five years from the patient's last visit.
- (4) Records referred to in Rule 14(4) relating to a complaint, charge or allegation lodged with Council in terms of section 31(1) of the Act must be presented to Council within seventy-two (72) hours of being requested to submit such records, or as otherwise arranged with Council.
- (5) Proper security arrangements must be made to protect records from loss, fire, alterations, additions, supplements or unauthorised use; electronic records must be backed up on a daily basis and electronic backups should be stored off-site.
- (6) Any alterations, additions and/or supplements to any records must be entered as a supplement to said record and must be dated and clearly defined as such.
- (7)
  - (a) The principal of a veterinary nursing facility will be responsible for confirming the identity of the attending veterinary para-professional to Council, where a complaint is lodged against his/her veterinary nursing facility.
  - (b) The principal of a veterinary nursing facility will be responsible for providing the records referred to in Rule 6(5), should a complaint be lodged against the professional no longer in the employ of the principal of the facility, subsequent to the date on which the complaint originated.
  - (c) If the principal of a facility fails to comply with the provisions of Rule 15(7)(a) he/she will be held accountable for any unprofessional conduct arising from such a complaint.

#### **14. Dress code**

- (1) A veterinary nurse shall adhere to a dress code that upholds the image of the veterinary nursing profession.
- (2) A veterinary nurse shall wear a professional identification device at all times whilst rendering a service that pertains to the profession of a veterinary nurse.

#### **15. Exemptions**

The Council may, on written application, and at its own discretion, grant exemption from the provision of specific Rules.

**16. Reporting of impairment or of unprofessional conduct**

- (1) A student, a veterinarian or para-veterinary professional must;
- a) Report impairment or suspected impairment in a student, a veterinary professional or para-veterinary professional to the Council if he/she is convinced that any student, veterinary or para-veterinary professional is impaired; and/or
  - b) Report his/her own impairment or suspected impairment to the Council if he/she is aware of his/her own impairment or has been publicly informed, or has been seriously advised by a colleague to act appropriately to obtain help in view of an alleged or established impairment;
- if such a level of physical or mental impairment has been identified that the welfare of the patients, the interests of the clients and/or the image of the profession will be compromised.
- (2) A student, a veterinary or para-veterinary professional is obliged to report any unprofessional, illegal or unethical conduct by another student, veterinary or para-veterinary professional, particularly where it involves the employment of unregistered professionals or where an animal's welfare may be compromised.

**17. Repeal and transitional arrangements**

The Rules relating to the practising of the para-veterinary profession of veterinary nurse published on 17 May 1991, as amended from time to time, are hereby repealed.