



MIGRATION AND WOMEN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS SOUTH AFRICA

skills • reality • challenges • support • political •
language • system • communication •
opportunity • foreign • work •
new • world •





MIGRATION AND WOMEN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS SOUTH AFRICA PRE-DECISION AND INFORMATION KIT

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Abbreviations

AHPCSA

- Allied Health Professions Council of South Africa

DENOSA

- Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa

HOSPERSA

- Health and Other Service Personnel Trade Union of South Africa

HPCSA

- Health Professions Council of South Africa

PDK

- Pre-decision and Information Kit

NEHAWU

- National Education Health and Allied Workers Union

NPSWU

- National Public Service Workers Union

NWG

- National Working Group

NUPSAW

- National Union of Public Service & Allied workers

POPCRU

- Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union

SACSSP

- South African Council for Social Service Professions

SADNU

- South African Democratic Nurses Union

SAMWU

- South African Municipal Workers Union

SANC

- South African Nursing Council

SAPC

- South African Pharmacy Council



Leaving South Africa to work in a foreign country

Introduction

It is human nature to want to position oneself where conditions are best for personal fulfilment, growth and success. Indeed this is confirmed by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act. No. 108 of 1996) in section 22 of the Bill of Rights which states that every citizen has the right to choose their trade, occupation or profession freely. While this section also determines that the health and social work professions will be regulated by law, it is further determined in section 21 that everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence. With South Africa's young democracy, the world has opened its doors for the people of South Africa allowing them to take their skills anywhere in the world.

Skilled people recognise that they have something to offer and they have a bargaining chip for a better quality of life. Because of the nature of the work that health and social work professionals do, their services or expertise are in demand globally and they encounter fewer hurdles in changing to a new environment. Globalisation is offering increased opportunities for skilled people to migrate. As the opportunities for health and social work professionals to move increases with globalization and the shift to a service economy; as the costs of international travel decrease; and the ability to communicate with other parts of the world becomes easier, it is likely that skills migration itself will increase over the next few decades, magnifying its importance as a public policy issue.

"My sole motivation to leave the country for a contract period was experience abroad, to travel and the opportunity to gain financial benefits. The international experience on my CV made a significant difference in the remuneration offer that I received when I came back to the country." (Radiographer returned from the UK)

"I was not really interested in the higher wages or the involvement in research, I wanted to see and hear the sounds of America!"

(Nurse returned from the USA)

"The fact is that it is a culture shock that you cannot describe to anyone else – you have to live it. But I do not regret one day of the time that I spent there – I met the most amazing people. Suddenly your horizons are so much wider and you develop an understanding of other people and other ways of doing things.... And yes, to survive you do as they do things there"

(Nurse returned from Saudi Arabia)

While there are many opportunities, there are also many challenges to look out for. While migration is not encouraged, particularly by the professional citizens of the third world countries to the wealthy first world, the purpose of this pamphlet prepared by the PSI affiliates in South Africa is to guide health and social workers to make an informed decision before they decide to relocate to work in another country.

Pre - Decision

It is advisable to gather as much information as possible about the country you intend to work in as a migrant worker. The information will include areas you will be based in, crime statistics, culture, social issues, language, economics, public transport, weather conditions etc.

Making the decision

The first step is to make quite sure that relocating to another country is really what you want to do. To assist with the decision, set clear goals and then weigh the different available options up. Remember that working in a foreign environment with a foreign culture is challenging



and migrant workers will at some stage become homesick. These pre-decision goals can become valuable during difficult times when away from “home” and you need a reminder of the reasons for choosing to work in a foreign country. Consider the different options and discuss these with the important people in your life to assist with decision making. This will be your family members, relatives and close friends. Try to consult early in the process with local and international trade unions regarding the process to migrate. Some countries like New Zealand, has a “points system” according to which potential migrant workers are screened for suitability to work there. This “points system” is based on information on your age, profession, qualifications obtained, years of working experience, registration with a professional council and professional organisation; whether you plan to start a business there, and some more. Depending on the area where you want to work, some institutions only accept university degrees.

The second step would then be to decide where to go to. Selecting a country where the applicant is conversant in the working language will ensure the ability to communicate with the local people and to be understood by them as well. Potential migrant workers often only consider the strength of the currency of the country where they intend to work, forgetting that there are other living expenses such as food, transport, accommodation, etc. Healthcare and social work practitioners who come from another country and who intend to send as much money home as possible, have difficulty assessing affordability in an objective manner. Immigrant workers automatically convert all amounts into the home currency, which makes everything seem expensive. In addition, any amount spent on any item other than basic food, is considered a luxury and the price will be questioned. So, be sure to obtain information on the cost of living in the chosen country and draw up a budget to determine what will be left after every cost has been deducted to assist with your decision to go.

Comparison of cost of living articles (as at July 2012)

Item	ZAR	GBP (£1: R12.74)	USD (1USD: R8.11)
Milk (1L)	R9.99	£1.88	\$2.85
Tea (100 bags)	R26.89	£4.65	\$4.35
100g Instant Coffee	R47.45	£3.39	\$7.05
White Bread	R5.59	£1.25	\$5.15
Margarine (1Kg)	R28.95	£3.70	\$2.08
Toothpaste	R10.25	£1.80	\$3.99

The transition can be easier if time is taken to familiarize yourself with the culture, living conditions, residential areas, schooling, where to obtain goods and services, recreation and leisure opportunities, public transport and whatever else is required. When speaking to South Africans in some foreign countries, the first thing they miss is the sunshine we accept as a given in South Africa! Factors to take into consideration when making a decision includes:

- Climate and weather conditions;
- Cultural norms and religious practices;
- Immigration rules and procedures;
- Visa and permit requirements and renewal;
- Access to communication
(e.g. calling home, phone cards, internet access);
- Basic laws, including labour legislation in the receiving country;
- Equal opportunity policies;
- The right to join trade unions.



“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has a very rich culture. All women and girls who reach puberty must wear an Abaya (long black dress with long sleeves). The husband or father will decide whether the women should also cover their head and faces so that only the eyes are visible. In some areas women also wear black gloves and cover their heads with chiffon so that no part of their faces is visible. Men wear white robes called ‘thobes’ with head scarves. Generally westerners are not expected to cover their heads or hair, but the Mutawa’s (religious police) will sometimes reprimand you for not covering your hair. Western women are expected to wear abaya’s in public.

The separation of men and women is also something to get used to, for example men and women would eat in different venues during a function. All restaurants, banks, etc. have a ‘male entrance’ and a separate ‘family entrance or section’. You cannot fit any clothes in the shop. You have to buy it, fit it at home or in the public bathroom in the mall and if it does not fit, you can exchange it.

Their religious dedication is amazing. The whole country and all its daily routines are based on their religion. Shops and businesses close during prayer times and even very sick patients pray when it is time to do so. Men may not touch women. This is also something to get used to – you know us South Africans! We speak with our hands and touch people that we speak to or work with”.
(Nurse returned to South Africa)

To do before you go

Once a decision has been made, the real work begins. There is a range of activities that need to take place before leaving the country. It may be a good idea to register an e-mail address if you do not have one yet to assist with communication with all the relevant parties, especially if you do not have to present yourself in person. There are a variety of sites where you can obtain a personal e-mail

address, for example
www.gmail.com;
www.hotmail.com;
www.yahoo.com.

Registration with a foreign regulatory authority

As a healthcare or social work professional the first step is to register with the professional regulatory body in the receiving country. This information can be accessed from websites and e-mailing or writing to them to obtain the application criteria and necessary forms. Generally such an application will require:

- A copy of your basic education and training undergone before registering with a professional council. This must be obtained from the educational institution where pre-registration education and training took place.
- Verification from the relevant South African health or social work professional council of your qualifications and a statement of a clear professional record indicating that there is no pending professional misconduct case against you.
- The types and years of working experience in a detailed Curriculum Vitae.
- Payment of an application fee and a registration fee.

Clarify whether additional qualifications or examinations are required in order to register in the receiving country.

“I immediately started working as a radiographer in the UK and did not have to do any additional programmes”
(Radiographer returned to South Africa)

“In Ireland I worked in the public services and could practice immediately as a midwife while in Australia this was not possible. I had to work in the post-natal unit and undergo a 6-week updating programme. I was tested on every skill, from giving an injection to delivering a



baby! And then I had to obtain third party insurance too.”
(Midwife returned to South Africa)

“It was quite a challenge to obtain registration in the US – you actually have to study for the examinations to make sure that you get a pass mark for the NCLEX and CGFMS! You cannot just depend on your experience and knowledge!”

(Midwife returned to South Africa)

“I was born in Italy and by obtaining my Italian passport, I did not have to go through the stringent application processes that other South Africans have to do.”

(Radiographer still working in the UK)

Management of finances

Drawing up a budget will provide some idea of how much money will be available to save or send home. Consideration should be given to how savings will be managed. Obtain information on access to banking, ways to remit money, placement of savings, pension and social security contributions.

Tax systems

The tax systems of different countries differ vastly and many immigrant workers do not expect to have to pay tax in their host country. Alternatively they may believe it will be possible to dodge the tax when it comes down to the moment of payment as this may be an acceptable practice in their society. So they may not fully pay attention to tax rates, believing that it will not be applicable to them personally. If you leave for employment in a foreign country, question the amount of tax which you will be expected to pay thoroughly and check:

- Is tax paid monthly or annually?
- Is it automatically deducted from your salary?

There are countries where agency workers can claim expenses that are tax exempt which may include:

- Accommodation
 - either privately rented accommodation or hospital accommodation;
- Protective clothing accompanied with a valid reason for the purchase and a receipt;
- Travel cost
 - either train tickets or kilometres;
- Food, without receipts,
 - if the worker was out of his or her home for up to 7 hours.

Employment contract

Properly review work contracts and make sure that it is fully understood before signing it. This is where assistance from a trade union can be obtained if necessary.

Things to check for:

- Protection clauses;
- Exclusions;
- Benefits;
- Unclear statements
 - clarify these immediately before signing;
- Transferability of pension;
- Dates and signatures.

Ensure that you have a signed copy of the contract before you leave South Africa.

With internet access it has become much easier to access information on the receiving country and the prospective new employer chosen. If internet access is available, some of the aspects that you could look for are contained in the box. This is where contacting a trade union in the chosen receiving country could be of valuable assistance.



What are the terms and conditions of employment?	What are the credentials of the employer?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work permit requirements (application processes, fees and possibilities for extension) • Written details of the employment offer and contract, including salary, hours, leave entitlements and benefits • Check salary against salary of locally recruited nurses, rates of pay, frequency of payment, and benefits • Calculate net salary when all deductions are made (see sample calculation below) • Income taxes • Job description (title, brief description of duties, required competencies) • Hierarchy of authority • Ratio of health practitioner: patients • Conditions of work (rest periods, shift lengths, overtime) • Workplace safety • HIV/AIDS policy at workplace • Anti-discrimination and equal opportunities policies • Workplace violence policies and grievance procedures • Promotion opportunities • Probation period, orientation or transition (terms and conditions including possible wage reductions) • Skills training and workplace orientation • Cultural and community orientation in host country • Evaluation procedures • Recruitment fees or bonuses (conditions) • Pre-employment medical exams (costs) • Travel assistance (to and from, home-leave, emergency travel) • Access to local/national/international trade unions • Notice period (termination) • Review the existing collective agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient population (categories, numbers) • Work environment (building, patient units) • Employers' safety record and safety policies (infection control, protective equipment, anti-violence policies) • Financial category of the institution (public, private or both) • Financial viability of the employer (sources of revenue, bed vacancies, budget deficits in recent years) • Personnel employed (categories, numbers, turnover) • Location of facility (safety, available day and evening transportation) • Housing (location, accommodations for family members) • Grievance procedures • Attitude towards unions • References from workers and unions (ask for the name of a local union, or see enclosed contacts and union resources within this kit) • Existing collective agreement (ask for a copy)

**Example:**

Salary calculation for a locum radiographer in the UK:

Basic salary £ 25.50 per hour worked for 7 hours per day, 5 days per week = £ 892.50

Tax deduction = £ 180.00

Agency fee (differs amongst agencies), say £ 1.90/hour worked per week = £ 66.50

Worker receive £ 646 per week, and still has to pay:

Accommodation cost £ 120 (£ 480 per month) at the hospital residence

Groceries and cost of daily living such as transport to and from work (see the cost of living expenses earlier)

Housing and living arrangements

Verify whether housing is available. Will accommodation be provided and who will be paying for the accommodation? If migrant workers are responsible for housing expenses, check whether it will be deducted from the remuneration package before the worker is paid.

It is crucial to arrange where you will stay on the day of arrival in the foreign country, especially if you arrive on your own and there will be no one to meet you. It will also be a good idea to obtain maps of the area where you are going to, to ensure that you do not get lost and know where to find basic services or shops.

If at all possible, try to find someone in the receiving country to talk about living there and the culture of the country. This will assist to know how people should be approached in that country.

Pre-departure services

Before you leave for your destination, establish whether there are pre-departure services available that can assist with your adaptation in the receiving country. Ask your recruiter, prospective new employer, trade union or appropriate government agency for information.

Safety and security

One need to be safe in the receiving country and safety and security measures are applied in all phases of the migration process. It starts with the police clearance that you have to obtain in South Africa. This is followed by the immigration authorities at the two airports where you will be asked many questions, often including personal information that can make one to feel insecure. Remember that this is only for your own and other citizens' safety. Authorities may decide to open and search anyone's luggage before being allowed to go through customs in the receiving country.

Once settled in at the new destination, immigration authorities may visit at your accommodation to check amongst other things when your permit expires. Please keep in mind that this would still be about everyone's safety and security, including your own.

Some tips for safety and security include:

- Avoid selecting countries where you cannot speak the language.
- Ask for directions at the airport desk on how to get to the venue you want to go to.
- Ask if there are any areas in town that should be avoided. Stick to well-lighted, main streets and public areas. Try not to walk around on your own after sunset.
- Looking lost (stopping and looking at addresses or



staring at street signs) may make you look like an easy target for crime. If you do get lost, find an open business and ask for directions.

- Only carry the cash you will need with you, and only small denominations.

Join a union

Consider joining a sister union in the receiving country where you plan to work. Membership can be obtained from PSI affiliates all over the world. For assistance in this regard you can contact the southern Africa Sub-regional Secretary in Johannesburg at Thembi.mngomezulu@publicservices.co.za or at 011 403 7765. Or you can go to the website www.world-psi.org. Remember, even if you retain membership of a South African trade union, no South African union has jurisdiction to assist migrant workers with labour relations or other problems experienced in the foreign country. Labour laws differ and trade unions have to be registered in that country to be able to assist you. Obtaining membership with a trade union in the receiving country will provide a degree of security. Do not wait until problems arise.

Working with recruitment agencies

Many recruitment agencies are available that can assist with an application to work in a foreign country. It is important to establish whether there are country-to-country agreements in place that will prohibit or limit recruitment of healthcare or social workers between those countries, such as the ones that exists between the Department of Health in South Africa and the United Kingdom; and also within the SADC region. These agreements are based on mutual agreement by the participating countries that health workers will not be recruited by wealthier countries from those countries with limited resources.

Remember before engaging an agency, please check

what the credentials of the recruitment or employment agency are before giving money to them. Make sure that the recruitment agency will be able to service your needs. For example, professionals who do locum work in a foreign country generally pays a monthly fee to the agency that will be subtracted before being paid. Make sure that the amount received after subtractions still is the amount that was promised.

Ask what support the agency will provide. What support can they make available in the event that something goes wrong with employers; or accommodation; or violation of one's employment contract?

Recruitment agencies:

Must have:

- Legal registration to recruit
- Track record of successful placements and references of satisfied clients (ask for contact details). Also check why clients may have been unhappy.
- Type of contracting employers (main contractor, sub-contractor, private or public). It is preferable that the agency has a dedicated person working with the different health or social work professional groups.

Do not:

- Deal with a person who cannot provide proof of being an authorized representative of a licensed recruitment agency.
- Do any transactions outside the registered address of the agency. Process your application personally in the registered office of the recruitment agency if it is accessible in South Africa.
- Respond to advertisements or brochures that invite you to apply and submit a fee with your application to a post box address. Respond with great care when applications are done via the internet and dedicated websites.
- Leave the country without the relevant work permit or



visas required by the country you are going to.

- Leave the country with only a tourist visa with the intention to work abroad. This is illegal in most countries.
- Work with anyone promising to fast track your application.

Once an agreement has been struck with the recruitment agency, ensure that you keep your side of the agreement. Generally the agency will expect the worker to submit log sheets and/or expense claim forms on a weekly basis. If this is not done meticulously, it will influence the payment you receive at the end of the week or month.

Documents to obtain

All the relevant travel, immigration, and employment information must be obtained. This can include all or some of the following:

- A valid passport
 - ensure that the passport is valid until after your planned return date.
- Evidence of your job offer and employer.
- Evidence of qualifications relevant to the type of work required.
- A detailed, updated curriculum vitae setting out your work experience to date.
- Verification from a South African professional council, where applicable
- Evidence of English language ability if English is not your first language.
- The work permit. This application may require attendance at the embassy or high commission in person at least once or more where fingerprints and a digital photo may be taken.
- Immunisation certificates/results.
- Applicants for UK visas valid for longer than six months require a certificate to show that they are free from infectious pulmonary tuberculosis (TB).
- Health questionnaire or a full medical check up. This is important for more than one reason. This check

up may identify a disease that you were not aware of. This may require you to reconsider migrating to a foreign destination where medical assistance and support structures may not be readily available. There are countries that do not allow individuals who are HIV positive to enter the country.

- Some countries require you to obtain third party malpractice insurance.
- Police clearance is required by most countries which take about eight (8) weeks to obtain.

What needs to be done when you leave

Responsibilities at home

When ready to leave, it is important to make sure that arrangements at home have been taken care of. Examples can include:

- Checking arrangements for family care in your absence.
- Attending to the payment of responsibilities, policies, insurances etc.
- Arranging with the relevant municipalities for the timely cancellation of water, electricity and telephone or cancellation of other services such as garden & pool services.

A limited number of migrant workers take their families with them. Generally if, as with most migrant workers, the primary purpose is to send money home, migrant workers generally reason that bringing family and providing for their living expenses in foreign currency, does not make sense. If you do plan to take your family with you, additional information should be obtained to assist you with the additional requirements to migrate.

Professional responsibilities

Ensure that your name is voluntarily removed from the register of the professional council in South Africa or,



alternatively, ensure that all the licensing requirements are complied with until you return to the country to prevent administrative removal of your name from the register. Most professional councils in South Africa require professionals to provide proof of having updated themselves every three to five years before annual licensing is done. If a practitioner therefore chooses to maintain registration in South Africa, she or he will have to comply with this requirement.

In addition those healthcare practitioners, who have not completed their compulsory community service year in South Africa before departing for an international destination, will have to do so on return to the country before they will be awarded full registration with the relevant council.

Register on websites for South African immigrants

Register on websites developed to support South Africans working in other parts of the world as users before you leave South Africa,
for example

<http://www.homecomingrevolution.co.za> and

<http://www.comehome.co.za>

Joined a union?

Be sure to obtain membership of another union before leaving the country.

"I went to another country with a promise of a great job. I spent my money and money I borrowed from relatives to pay everything so I could have this job. I left my family, as my husband was unemployed and we wanted to provide our children with a better life. I am a qualified nurse and I did this because an agency came to my country and made job overseas sound wonderful. I also thought I would get a better education and get a better job when I came home.

This agency made everything sound wonderful. We would have money and I could educate my children and keep them well.

I had never left my country before. I arrived excited and I found that those things were different from what I was promised. I could not work as a proper nurse and became an auxiliary in a nursing home. I was so sad, I could not go home because of the contract and I had no money. I worked, I made money and I have helped my family. But at what cost? Depression, loneliness, and feeling mistreated. I could not go to anyone for help. But I have learnt and thought about it. I realized that most of us in this position were women with families to keep, who had borrowed money. We really needed these jobs. Is this discrimination against women and people who are too poor to fight back?"

A caring person

(Health Worker Migration Community of Practice, Health Worker Migration Global Dialogue)

Situations where workers are exploited can be limited if they have union membership that can provide access to assistance in the receiving country. It is also believed that a Code of Practice for recruitment of workers to receiving countries can provide a framework for the regulation of the recruitment of these workers which will provide protection to them. A Code of Practice is important because it will result in ethical recruitment of workers which means:

- fairness and transparency with the rights and responsibility of all parties respected;
- that all workers, including migrant workers, will have equal rights guaranteed without discrimination. All workers will have the same legal protection within the country as it applies to citizens. In case of grievances and violation of rights, redress mechanisms must be available to all workers.



For more information on ethical recruitment visit
www.world-psi.org/migration.

On departure

Make sure that all the proper travel, employment and immigration documents are carried in your hand luggage.

These include:

- Valid travel and immigration documents
- Work permit and/or visa
- In some cases,
transit visa and/or other registration procedures
- Work contract:
is it available in a language you understand?

Make two copies of the original documents of all travel documents to provide for a back up in the event of loss or damage. Leave one copy at home with a person that you trust and can contact in an emergency; and one copy in your luggage.

On arrival in the receiving country

Inform the proper authorities and concerned people of your arrival which can include the following:

- The employer
- Relatives and/or friends in the receiving country
- Family and friends back home
- The South African embassy or consular office in the receiving country
- The proper regulatory bodies
(e.g. professional regulatory body, work permit and licensing offices)
- Your union or worker association back home
- A sister union in the receiving country

Very important

- do you have a place to sleep on arrival in this country and do you know how to get there?

Employment

- Once employment has started, make sure that what you get, is what was promised - there must be no change in terms of reference. Under no circumstances may anyone take or keep your passport when reporting for employment. This is one situation where you would approach a local trade union for assistance because in a foreign country you would not even know where or how to start a complaint.
- Assess whether employment conditions are the same as those agreed during the recruitment and contract signing. Replacing a contract with another one, known as "contract substitution" is unacceptable and could be illegal.
- Has secure and affordable housing been provided and agreements with the employer or recruitment agency in this regard been honoured?
- Are other basic services available and accessible such as public transport, post office and supermarket; healthcare facilities and social services, migrant support activities and other networks. Open a bank account as soon as possible and submit the details to the employer or agency for your salary payments to be made.
- If planning to send money back home, what are the services that can be used or what are the savings and investment packages available?
- Make contact with the local union representative. Keep contact with the union back home.
- Is there access to services in favour of integration; language training and cultural orientation; policies on racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, including grievance procedures (at the workplace and in the community).



- Are there other support services for South Africans available such as Association of South African Nurses in the U.K. (ASANUK)?

For more information on ASANUK contact them at 00 44 7951437820 or find an application form at <http://www.africarecruit.com/healthcare/img/download/AssociationofSouthAfricanNursesUK.pdf>

ASANUK is based in London at Suite 368, 456-458 Strand, London, WC2R 0DZ

Should planning include staying for a long period or permanently, one needs to find out if it is possible to gain citizenship from the relevant authorities in the receiving country.

This requires information on the following:

- Requirements and procedures
- Support agencies
(e.g. immigration lawyer)
- Important documents you might need
(e.g. police clearance, birth certificate, driver's license, family documents, employment records, education certificates)

South African embassies

South Africa has 93 High Commissions and Embassies all over the world that can be accessed. Find the embassy in your receiving country on http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/sa_abroad/index.htm. All the embassies are listed on this website under the relevant country and not under the specific city or town where you will be working. Some of these embassies have their own websites where detailed information on the embassy is provided. Make a note of the embassy's address and contact details to take with you.

Coming back home

There comes a time that you may wish to return home permanently. It has happened that some migrant workers end up not having sufficient funds to return home. If at all possible try to provide for such an event by putting aside some funds to ensure that you are not stranded in a foreign country.

If planning to return, find out whether there are services and incentives available in South Africa for returning migrants that can assist you to return. Find out about employment opportunities for returning health and social workers.

Several initiatives exist in South Africa to make coming home easier such as the Home Coming Revolution (<http://www.homecomingrevolution.co.za/>) and the Come Home Campaign, a joint project of the trade union, Solidarity, and the Company for Immigration (<http://www.comehome.co.za/>). To obtain assistance from these groups access their websites. These groups can provide assistance with:

- Efforts to find employment in South Africa;
- Information about the determination of the validity of returning migrants' South African citizenship;
- Help with getting a South African evaluation of qualifications obtained abroad;
- Advice about the South African registration of children born abroad;
- Advice about obtaining immigration documentation for foreign spouses joining South Africans here;
- Advice about the shipping of household goods;
- Advice about the importation of vehicles and pets;
- Advice about the conversion of foreign driver's licences;
- Advice about foreign documents which might be required in South Africa upon return;
- Contact with local estate agents to find the property required;



- Contact with local financial and tax advisors;
- General advice about schools, studies, medical specialists, medical schemes, church denominations, sport clubs, labour legislation and any other information which might be required.

Register on these websites as users before you leave South Africa. They also provide support services and newsletters for South Africans living and working in other parts of the world to support and to keep them up to date with what is happening at home.

What was good of the international working experience:

- There is recognition of good work done and a sense of pride to be a registered nurse. Units with good ratings from patients will receive additional perks
- Doctors do not get abusive when you ask questions or why something is done in a certain way
 - they provide a wealth of information instead!
- There are computers to monitor patients - you can see exactly what is going on with every patient delegated to you.
- Standardisation of orders
 - when a patient is admitted the management of the patient is clear as standard protocols are followed
- There is no lack of finance for equipment repair or replacement, medication or staff in the US hospitals
- Health practitioners are well paid and paid bi-weekly
- Doctors see patients on a daily basis and writes notes to which you can go back and clarify any orders.
- The call bell system allows you to check what the patient needs and get it before actually going to his or her room

Conclusion

Being well prepared before you go to an international destination, can contribute significantly to a positive experience. However, it is clear from discussions with migrant workers coming back to the country, that there is no place like home! Returning health workers indicate that their experiences are both positive and negative.

What was not so good about the international working experience:

- The very real threat of litigation in the US.
- All patients are treated exactly the same way
 - there is no individualisation of care.
- Patients who are in labour who come to the hospital unbooked in the US are treated like drug addicts because this generally is the group of healthcare users that will not book or attend ante-natal services
- Some countries become a very dispensable society
 - patients are issued with a standard package and everything is discarded whether it was used or not
- Job security is not the same as in South Africa
 - if you do not follow the rules, they have no hesitation in firing you!
- Working as a locum means that you are never sure how long you will stay at an institution
 - "I did not like this insecurity and constant movement"



Coming to South Africa as a skilled migrant healthcare or social service worker

INTRODUCTION

South Africa forms the southernmost tip of Africa with a surface area of 1 223 201 km². It is home to a nation with warm-spirited and inventive people where great natural wealth and breathtaking landscapes come together to create fresh opportunities and new ways of doing things. South Africa is fondly known as the Rainbow Country because of its diversity of people, cultures and natural scenery. The South African nation comprises people of San (or Bushman), Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Tsonga, Venda, Indian, Afrikaner and mixed origin, as well as immigrant communities from all corners of the world. Officially the population consists of more than 54 million people. South Africa's peaceful transition to a democracy in 1994 is regarded as a miracle in world history. Since the end of apartheid in 1994, the consolidation of democracy and enviable economic stability has created both a new set of opportunities, and challenges all aimed at social transformation.

Although the Government does not support actively recruiting immigrants, it acknowledges the fact that the immigration of highly skilled human resources and entrepreneurs is a necessity for the country's economy and financial growth. Particularly in healthcare services, targeted recruitment of foreign doctors has been done by the Department of Health to assist with service delivery in the rural areas of the country. In the private health sector the big hospital groups have imported nurses specifically from India to assist with the skills shortage in South Africa.

"It is a commonly known fact that when you start your nursing career that you would have the opportunity to be recruited to work abroad. There is a lot of recruitment by countries in India because of the fact that India is training a lot of nurses". (Recruits from India)

Average climate in South Africa

South Africa is famous for its sunshine and most of the country has warm, sunny days and cool nights. Climatic conditions generally range from Mediterranean in the south-western corner of the country to temperate in the interior plateau, and subtropical in the northeast. A small area in the northwest has a desert climate. It's a relatively dry country, with an average annual rainfall of about 464mm (compared to a world average of about 860mm). While the Western Cape gets most of its rainfall in winter (June to August), the rest of the country is generally a summer-rainfall region (November through March). Temperatures in South Africa tend to be lower than in other countries at similar latitudes - such as Australia - due mainly to greater elevation above sea level. Summer temperatures range between 15 – 36° C depending on the area where you are with lowest winter temperatures ranging from –3 ° C in colder parts of the country, such as the Free State and Northern Cape, to 10 ° C in the warmer, coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal. In contrast to the northern countries of the world, South Africans spend Christmas breaks on the beach in the height of summer.

Conditions and cost of living in South Africa

Prices of goods and commodities are subject to change and may differ from store to store, but these prices should provide a good idea of the cost of living in South Africa. The quoted prices include VAT (value added tax) of 14%, which is payable on all commodities and services, with the exception of basic foodstuffs such as bread, milk and mealie meal.

Some examples of the cost of articles for daily living are provided in South African Rands (ZAR).



Housing

Housing cost depend on where you choose to stay:

- Rental for a bachelor apartment
(living and sleeping area, small kitchen and bathroom)
– fully furnished available from R3 500 per month.
- Rental one bedroom apartment
– from R4 000 per month without furniture.
- Rental three bedroom home
R10 000 – R20 000 depending on area selected.

Different employers will certainly have different accommodation arrangements for the workers that are recruited. If the employer decides to provide free accommodation, the cost of the accommodation would have to be offset against the basic salary amount, otherwise it would be considered inequitable by the South African Department of Home Affairs. It would also be extremely difficult to justify to the South African Nurses.

Household goods (As at July 2012)	ZAR	USD (1\$:R8.11)	GBP (1£:R12.74)	Indian Rupee (INR) (1R:INR 10.11)	Kenya Shilling (KES) (1R: KES 6.68)
7.2Kg top loader washing machine	R 7,499.00	\$ 949.32	£ 604.31	INR 77 836.89	KS 51 429.32
265L Fridge/freezer	R 2,199.00	\$ 308.14	£ 196.15	INR 25 264.89	KS 16 693.32
Hair dryer	R 149.00	\$ 18.37	£ 11.70	INR 1 506.39	KS 995.32
Kettle	R 129.00	\$ 15.91	£ 10.13	INR 1 304.19	KS 861.72
Iron	R 159.00	\$ 19.61	£ 12.48	INR 1 607.49	KS 1 062.12
Small microwave oven	R 859.99	\$ 106.04	£ 67.50	INR 8 694.50	KS 5 744.73
54cm Television	R 1,400.00	\$ 172.63	£ 109.89	INR 14 154.00	KS 9 352.00

Household goods (As at July 2012)	ZAR	USD (1\$:R8.11)	GBP (1£:R12.74)	Indian Rupee (INR) (1R:INR 10.11)	Kenya Shilling (KES) (1R: KES 6.68)
1 L Milk	R9.99	\$ 1.23	£ 0.78	INR 101.00	KS 66.73
White bread	R5.59	\$ 0.69	£ 0.44	INR 56.51	KS 37.34
Margarine 1 Kg	R28.95	\$ 3.57	£ 2.27	INR 292.68	KS 193.39
Cereal	R34.99	\$ 4.31	£ 2.75	INR 353.75	KS 233.73
Tea bags (100)	R26.89	\$ 3.32	£ 2.11	INR 271.86	KS 179.63
Frozen chicken pieces	R37.99/Kg	\$ 4.05	£ 2.98	INR 384.08	KS 253.77
Red meat - depends on the cut selected	R 42 – 90/Kg	\$ 5.18 – 11.10	£ 3.30 – 7.06	INR 424.62 – 909.90	KS 280.56 – 601.20
Frozen vegetables	R36.00/Kg	\$ 4.44	£ 2.83	INR 363.96	KS 240.48
100g Instant Coffee	R47.45	\$ 5.85	£ 3.72	INR 479.72	KS 316.97
Toothpaste	R10.25	\$ 1.26	£ 0.80	INR 103.63	KS 68.47

Household goods (As at July 2012)	ZAR	USD (1\$:R8.11)	GBP (1£:R12.74)	Indian Rupee (INR) (1R:INR 10.11)	Kenya Shilling (KES) (1R: KES 6.68)
Cinema per person	R 58	\$ 7.15	£ 4.55	INR 586.38	KS 387.44
Live shows per person from	R320	\$ 39.46	£ 25.12	INR 3 235.20	KS 2 137.60
Soft cover books from	R160.00	\$ 19.73	£ 12.56	INR 1 617.60	KS 1 068.80
Entrance to parks in the city is generally free					
A fee is charged for entrance to some parks and picnic spots, game reserves and areas for bird watching					
For the more active and adventurous there are wonderful hiking trails, river rafting, diving, snorkelling and other water sports. These can be done at a fee.					



Language

The five most commonly-spoken home languages are IsiZulu (22,9%), IsiXhosa (17,9%), Afrikaans (14,4%), Sepedi (9,2%) and English (8,6%). The Constitution recognizes 11 languages as official languages at national level, namely the 5 above, as well as IsiNdebele, Sesotho, SiSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda en Setswana. In general English and Afrikaans are the most commonly used languages in official circles and the business world.

Migrant workers should have a good knowledge of at least English in order to cope with life in South Africa. All relevant documentation of migrant workers should be translated into English by an officially registered translator before submitting it to authorities (for example their health professional qualifications). Please note that South Africa does not offer compulsory/sponsored/intensive language

courses for immigrants or migrant workers. It is up to individuals to study the languages of their choice and they have to pay for tuition themselves.

Postage & telecommunication

South Africa has a comprehensive postage and telecommunication system. Surface mail will take 6 – 8 weeks and airmail 3 – 7 days depending on the exact location of the item. Stamps can be bought from post offices, Postnet or most stationers such as CNA. Postnet consists of a group of stores and offers an independent postage service. They have slightly cheaper rates for overseas mail. The rates for postal services are contained in the table. For general postal information, call the Post Office Customer Care Line toll-free at 0800-111-502.

Postal service rates		
Item	Air mail	Surface mail
Aerograms	R 4.00	R 3.30
Postcards	R 5.40	R 3.00
Small letters (50g or less)	R 6.30	R 5.30
Medium letters (250g or less)	R 21.25	R 16.10
Large letters (300g or less)	R 36.10	R 24.15
Small parcels (per 100 g)	R 27.40	R 13.75
Registration fee per item	R 25.30	R 25.30

Telecommunications are available at kiosks and Postnet or can be rented by individuals. Telkom landlines can be rented with additional payments made for the calls made from the relevant line number. These lines can be used for both fax and telephone. There are four companies that mobile phones can be obtained on contract or as a “pay-as-you-go” service. All mobile phone contracts include a phone. Individuals who have a mobile phone can only obtain a sim card to use in their phones, but will still have to pay for the calls made.

Internet access is available via the different telephone rentals or for ad hoc use internet cafes are available.

Transport

Major South African central cities are linked by reliable air, rail and road transport services. Public transport services within towns and cities are irregular though. Taxis can be extremely expensive and most South Africans therefore have to depend on their own means of transport. Minibus taxis are responsible for 65% of the 2,5 billion annual passenger trips in urban areas, as well as a high percentage of rural and inter-city transport. A Taxi Recapitalisation Programme has been implemented to replace the current ageing minibus taxi fleet with new, safer, purpose-built 18-seater and 35-seater vehicles which will be locally built.



South Africans drive on the left-hand side of the road. Generally the speed limits range from 60km/h in residential areas to a maximum of 120km/h on national highways. The required speed is indicated on the signs on the roadside. Drivers' licenses fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport, but local governments (municipalities) do the evaluation and exchange of foreign licenses for South African equivalents. Please note that your license must be translated into one of the official languages of South Africa and that you must have a permanent residence permit to qualify for a South African driver's license. This license has to be carried on the person of drivers at all times.

Provisions for Family

Under the South African temporary residence permit law, families of migrant workers can join these workers on a Relatives permit. However, they are not allowed to work. This requires a separate work permit for the person, which can only be obtained if the employer can prove that they cannot find a local to do the job. An international standard benefit for contract workers recruited from elsewhere is that they receive one flight home per year.

Health services in South Africa

All South Africans have a constitutional right to access healthcare, including reproductive healthcare. Although the World Health Organization (WHO) has not identified South Africa as a country with a serious shortage of healthcare workers, the health services, both public and private, are experiencing dire shortages of healthcare practitioners. Institutions have been unable to fill vacancies of all types of healthcare practitioners, but especially nurses in all units with particular serious shortages in the specialist units.

"There has never been a shortage of nurses in India and there are also no workload complaints. We are working 8 hour shifts and not 12 hour shifts. In India we are spoiled

by the fact that there is a doctor on duty 24 hours a day in a specialized unit. Services such as laboratories and chemists are situated in the wards. In areas like maternity we hardly ever call on a doctor as in the Indian culture we believe in normal deliveries. Only $\pm 5\%$ of our labour cases ends up in caesarean sections, contrary to the average 15-20 cases we do here in SA". (Recruits from India)

The public health sector makes provision for healthcare services to the bulk of the people in the country. At national level government is responsible for leadership, policy development and capacitating service delivery; the provincial level is responsible for planning, delivering, monitoring and evaluating healthcare services and other non-personal health services; and the district health services which are established by the provinces and numerous municipalities, are responsible for ensuring that all health services in the district are provided within the norms, policies and guidelines agreed upon at national and provincial level. Since 1994, the universal provision of primary healthcare has been a cornerstone of the South African government's health services.

The private healthcare sector consists mostly of curative services with a profit motive, which includes a wide variety of hospitals, clinics and private healthcare practitioners in their own businesses. The private health sector also has a non-profit/non-governmental/civil society/voluntary organisation component that relies on sponsorships to run their services. Although some charge fees for the services they render, they do not have a commercial or profit motive.

For more information on the health services in South Africa go to the following websites:

www.doh.gov.za;

www.lifehealthcare.co.za;

www.mediclinic.co.za;

www.netcare.co.za and

www.clinix.co.za.



Recruitment of foreign healthcare and social work practitioners

South Africa has been recruiting healthcare professionals selectively. The main competitors in the global currency market remains the Gulf countries and other advanced 'developing' countries. Many of their governments offer family visas which enable family members to work – in South Africa this is not the case. They are also closer in flight time and have contract arrangements which fit the societal norms, such as working 8-hour instead of the 12-hour shifts in South Africa. South Africa does not require TOEFL certificate if healthcare or social service practitioners have trained in English.

The current processing time for a foreign registration is about 18 months to 2 years. It is very important that candidates ask questions about previous processing times and the experience of other candidates rather than listen to promises made that it is possible to take shortcuts or make the process shorter by exerting influence.

A piece of advice for potential migrant workers is to 'stay where you are and keep working' until the registration process in the receiving country is complete; or you have the documents in hand that will allow formal work to begin. Many individual workers, especially nurses, hear about the shortage in South Africa, or another country, and arrive without making preliminary enquiries. Alternatively they struggle to get information from the relevant professional council and believe that it will be easier once they are in South Africa. This will not make the process any easier and can become very costly to stay if you do not have an income.

Registered foreign healthcare and social service workers receive the same contractual benefits as that offered to local practitioners. The practitioners that the government has recruited are placed only in the rural services and

cannot enter private practices. The Indian nurses that were recruited by Mediclinic work in the private hospitals of the company which are based in the metropolitan areas. South African law does not allow migrant workers to study in the country while they are employed on a work permit.

"Yes, the content of the contracts were explained to us when we agreed to work in SA and the same has been implemented when we arrived in South Africa".
(Recruits from India)

A new phenomenon in South Africa is the Corporate Permits that have been awarded to private companies to recruit nurses. This allows these companies to go to the country where they wish to recruit nurses to interview interested persons and then to process the applications for a group of practitioners. Foreign workers must always confirm if the agent that they are dealing with who is doing group recruitment has a licence to operate in the relevant country.

The majority of migrant workers do not wish to remain in a foreign country and do return to their source countries.

"Our future expectations in nursing are to obtain as much experience as possible by working in different countries but to return home before we reach the age of 35 years. In India you will be considered for employment in the government sector if you write and pass the government nursing exam before you reach the age of 35 years. Some of us still have small children or even have to bear children in the near future". (Recruits from India)

An interesting observation amongst migrant nurses is that most foreign nurses apply to work in a number of countries simultaneously. They will attend an interview for one employer while simultaneously having signed contracts with any number of other employers. The employer, with which they can start with first, generally is the winner. This



is often the reason for the loss of suitable candidates in South Africa because the application process here takes such a long time.

Acceptance as a skilled healthcare or social service worker in South Africa

All professionals are expected to register with one of the professional councils in South Africa. The details of the application process can be obtained from the respective councils. It is important to understand the terminology used for the practitioners in South Africa as they may mean different categories of workers in different countries. For example, the term “Staff Nurse” may mean the same category as the South African professional nurse. In South Africa these two categories of nurses have different scopes of practice.

Application process

The applicant must submit their completed forms and supporting documents to the relevant professional council. Generally the following information will be required from the applicant:

- A letter of intent;
- Curriculum Vitae;
- A letter of support from the National Department of Health Foreign Workforce programme signed by the applicant

Contact person:
The Deputy Director

Postal address:
Private Bag X828,
Pretoria,
0001
South Africa.

Telephone Number:
+27 12 312 0722

Facsimile Number:
+27 12 312 0535

E-mail
Smith@health.gov.co.za

- A certified copy of the passport and/or copy of South African identity document
- An evaluation certificate from the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) of the applicant's qualification



South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

Street address:

SAQA House
(formerly known as Hatfield Forum West)
1067 Arcadia Street
Hatfield, Pretoria
South Africa

Postal Address:

Postnet Suite 248
Private Bag X06
Waterkloof, 0145
South Africa

For general enquires:

saqainfo@saqa.org.za

Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications call centre:

Telephone Number:

+27 12 431-5070 or
+27 12 431 5000

For information regarding the

Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications contact

ceeq@saqa.co.za

- A certificate for a Test on English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for fluency in English if the applicant's training was not conducted in English
- Certified copies of the professional qualification certificates.
- The relevant council will issue the applicant with a transcript form to be submitted by the applicant to the training institution where the applicant acquired her or his basic qualification requesting a transcript of the training record
- Valid license to practice from the regulatory body of the applicant's country of origin.
- A verification form issued by the relevant council must be submitted by the applicant to the Professional Council/ Board/Ministry of Health or regulatory body from his/ her country of origin that requests a statement of good standing or verification.

Once these documents have been assessed, the applicant will be required to perform an entrance examination for which the applicant must pay a fee. When the applicant has been successful, then an application for registration must be submitted on the prescribed forms accompanied with the prescribed application fee

Assessment of qualifications

On submission of all the required documents, each applicant will be assessed individually by the relevant council to determine whether he or she qualify for registration in South Africa and which category of health or social service worker the applicant qualifies for. Many professionals may not be found suitable for registration in the category they expected, despite having done a formal degree at a recognized university in their home country. One of the reasons for this is that the training schools in the home country do not complete the forms required by the South Africa professional councils in sufficient detail.

**Where to apply for registration**

For registration as a nurse contact the
South African Nursing Council (SANC)

Postal Address:

PO Box 1123
Pretoria
0001
South Africa

Physical Address:

603 Pretorius Street
Arcadia
Pretoria
South Africa

Telephone Number:

+27 12 420 1000

Facsimile Number:

+27 12 343 5400

E-mail:

registrar@sanc.co.za

Website:

www.sanc.co.za

For registration as a doctor; dentist; radiographer; physiotherapist; biokinetics; occupational therapist; psychologist; speech; hearing and learning therapist; dietician; emergency care workers; podiatrist; optician; medical Orthotics/Prosthetics; dental therapist; clinical or medical technologist; environmental health practitioner contact the
Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

Postal Address:

P O Box 205
Pretoria
0001

Physical Address:

553 Vermeulen Street
Cnr Hamilton and Vermeulen Street Arcadia Pretoria

Telephone Number:

+27 12 338 9300 or
+27 12 338 9301

Facsimile Number:

+27 12 328 5120 or
+27 12 325 2074

E-mail:

hpcsa@hpcsa.co.za



To register as a pharmacist or a pharmacist's assistant, contact the **South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC)**

Postal Address:

PO Box 40040
Arcadia
0007
South Africa

Physical Address:

SAPC Building
591 Belvedere Street
Arcadia
0183
South Africa

Telephone Number:

+27 12 319 8500

Facsimile Number:

+27 12 321 1492

E-mail:

amos@pharmcouncil.co.za

For registration in homeopathy; chiropractic; naturopathy; phytotherapy; ayurveda; Chinese medicine and acupuncture; therapeutic aroma therapy, massage therapy and reflexology contact the **Allied Health Professions Council of South Africa (AHPCSA)**

Postal address:

Private Bag X4
Queenswood
0121
South Africa

Physical Address:

61 Rose Street
Riviera
Pretoria
South Africa

Telephone Number:

+ 27 12 329-4001

Facsimile Number:

+27 12 329-2279

E-mail:

info@ahpcsa.co.za



For registration as a social worker or
social auxiliary worker contact the

**South African Council for Social Service Professions
(SACSSP)**

Postal Address:

Private Bag X12
Gezina
0031
South Africa

Physical Address:

37 Annie Botha Ave
Riviera
Pretoria
0084
South Africa

Switch Board:

+27 12 356 8300

Help Desk Registration:

+27 12 356 8333

Facsimile Number:

+27 12 356 8400

E-mail:

mail@sacssp.co.za
customercare@sacssp.co.za

Worker rights in South Africa

South Africa has very strict labour legislation and most kinds of employment are subject to minimum wage requirements. This even applies to domestic workers. Useful information and samples of contracts can be found at www.labour.gov.za.

Belonging to a trade union

Every employee, therefore including migrant workers, has the right to join a trade union, subjected to the trade union's constitution and to participate in the forming of a trade union or federation of trade unions. You are encouraged to join one of the trade unions organising in the health sector in South Africa. The southern Africa PSI office based in Johannesburg, South Africa can introduce you to these unions. Contact the PSI office at Thembi.mngomezulu@publicservices.co.za or telephone +27 11 403 7765 or fax +27 11 403 5166. Contact the PSI project partners or visit their websites to obtain more information on them.

How does the law protect workers?

The Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1995) generally referred to as the LRA, identifies a variety of employment practices, apart from dismissals, which are regarded as unfair. In order to succeed in a claim for unfair labour practice, an employee must prove that the alleged unfair act falls within the definition of an unfair labour practice as provided by the LRA. This is an important reason to belong to a trade union in South Africa so that you can get assistance when required.

Workers are protected in the workplace by the Occupational Health and Safety Act (No.85 of 1993). This Act makes provision for requirements that both the employer and the workers have to comply with to establish and maintain safety in the workplace. The general duties



of employers are to create a working environment that is safe and without risk to health of its workers or other visitors to the workplace. Every employer who has 20 or more employees in any workplace, must designate health and safety representatives to oversee the health and safety in the workplace. Workers also have general duties that they have to comply with. They have to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions, such as the patients of healthcare workers. The Act is quite clear about the duty not to interfere, damage or tamper with anything that is provided in the interest of health and safety. Workers therefore have to be trained to use the equipment provided in an institution. A range of regulations have been developed to provide detail on how this Act should be implemented in the workplace. One of these is the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents which make provision for universal precautions to protect health workers against any organisms that could be transferred through contact with blood and body fluids.

There are a variety of other laws that can protect migrant workers that a union can assist with. One of these is the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (No. 4 of 2000). This is an Act that protects all people in South Africa against unfair discrimination and hate speech.

Other challenges

South Africa's economic growth demands a healthy population and workforce. To address the challenge created by HIV&AIDS, the government has a comprehensive plan that is the largest programme of its kind in the world. More information on the National Strategic Plan can be accessed at www.doh.gov.za.

Providing safety and security for citizens, visitors and workers is another major priority for South Africa, with the police service building and revitalising partnerships with all sectors of society to combat crime. The South African Police Service budget has grown over the last few years enabling reductions in certain key categories of serious crime. General safety and security measures should be applied by foreign workers, namely

- Do not walk on your own in areas where you cannot speak the local language.
- Looking lost (stopping and looking at addresses or staring at street signs) may make you look like an easy target for crime. If you do get lost, find an open business and ask for directions or get a taxi to take you to your destination.
- Ask if there are any areas in town that should be avoided. Stick to well-lit, main streets and public areas. Try not to walk around on your own after sunset.
- Only carry with you the cash you will need, and only small denominations.



Assistance for Prospective Immigrants

The Immigration Act (Act 13 of 2002) makes provision for more categories of immigration than the previous legislation of 1995. Individuals, who intend to immigrate, should consult the South African Department of Home Affairs for further details.

Department of Home Affairs

Postal Address:

Private Bag X114,
Pretoria
0001,
Republic of South Africa

Telephone Number:

+2712 810 6126

Facsimile:

+2712 810

Website:

www.home-affairs.gov.za

There is no need to use an agent or lawyer when submitting any of the above applications, or when dealing with any government department. The officials are obliged to provide whatever information one requires. There are organizations available on the web that offers their services to assist potential immigrants. Be sure to check their credentials before you enter into a business arrangement with them. Employment is quite high in South Africa and unless one has skills that will respond to the shortages in the relevant sectors and the health sector in particular, it may not be easy to obtain employment or good financial offers.

Remember that the onus rests on an immigrant to keep all permits valid at all times. Once a permit has expired, the Department of Home Affairs is not obliged to accept applications to renew it. To avoid becoming an illegal alien in South Africa, always renew permits before they expire.

Citizenship is only an option after a foreign person has been in the country for five years.

Conclusion

For those healthcare workers who wish to come to South Africa, the country promises to offer an exciting and fulfilling working and life experience with a broad range of healthcare areas to work in. The most recent nursing recruits from India to South Africa have shared some of their experiences that have been included in this pamphlet.

**What was positive**

“We would advise other health workers wanting to come and work in South Africa in the future positively. We really enjoy our work and we are very happy with our current employer”.

“On both personal and nursing related matters we depend upon our employer to assist us should you experience any problems/concerns during your employment in SA. They have a dedicated person who always find a way to assist us should the need arise. On the topic of nursing we do not really experience any problems and we adjusted to the environment”.

“If given the opportunity in future, we would definitely return to the same hospital, maybe because the experience has been so positive with this organisation, but if given the choice between different hospital groups, we would certainly work for them as first choice”.

(Recruits from India)

What was negative

“Foreign nurses should be taught the skill of driving and have the opportunity to make use of personal transport in South Africa. We would like to do more sight seeing and visit new friends”.

“South Africans seem to pay tax every time they buy something – this seems to be extreme!”

(Recruits from India)



Contact details of PSI affiliates

As indicated in this brochure, the PSI affiliates in South Africa can be contacted for membership and assistance on migration to the country for employment. Their contact details and website addresses are included in the list for those persons who wish to contact them.

Trade Union	Target Group	Telephone	Fax	Website
1. Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa				
DENOSA	Nurses	+27 12 343 2315	+27 12 344 0750	www.denosa.org.za
2. Health and Other Service Personnel Trade Union of South Africa				
HOSPERSA	Health and social workers	+27 12 3652021	+27 12 365 2043	www.hospersa.co.za
3. National Education Health and Allied Workers Union				
NEHAWU	Health and social workers	+27 11 833 2902	+27 11 833 0757	www.nehawu.org.za
4. National Public Service Workers Union				
NPSWU	Health and social workers	+27 31 3047563	+27 31 307 3306	www.npswu.org
5. National Union of Public Service & Allied workers				
NUPSAW	Health and social workers	+27 12 342 1674	086 672 4354	www.nupsaw.co.za
6. Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union				
POPCRU	Police and prison	+27 11 275 8834	+27 11 726 8830	www.popcru.org.za
7. South African Democratic Nurses Union				
SADNU	Nurses	+27 51 448 7551	+27 51 448 6365	www.sadnu.org.za
8. South African Municipal Workers Union				
SAMWU	Municipal workers and health workers	+27 21 333 1582	+27 11 696 7377	www.snpfund.org.za

