



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**  
HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Keynote Address by MEC for Health Dr. Bandile Masuku, on the occasion of the signing of the Statute of the Gauteng College of Nursing (GCON), 08 July 2020, Ormonde, Johannesburg**

**Head of Department of Health – Prof. M Lukhele**

**Executive Members of the Interim College Council, led by Prof. Baloyi**

**Executive Members of The Department**

**National Chief Nursing Officer- Dr N J Makhanya**

**Chairperson of the Gauteng Nurse Leaders Forum- Brigadier General Zuziwe Maso**

**Officials of the Department present here and those watching this ceremony through virtual platform**

**Members of the Media**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

Good morning,

Today is an important day for the Gauteng Department of Health and the nurse's fraternity specifically as it is a day where we as the Department officiate the programme for transforming nursing education in the province. Although it has taken the province some time to implement the resolution to transform nursing education, the transformation of nursing

education and training remain a priority for the Department. This commitment also seen in how as a Department we have prioritised the Improvement of Patient's Experience of Care in our facilities, a priority that is intertwined with the nursing practice, since nurses are mainly the first point of contact with the Department that the public interfaces with. The call to participate in the transformation of both Higher Education and the medical practice is one that we as a Department take very seriously. We recognise that although the nursing practice is one of the oldest professions, it is still very important that it continuously evolves to meet the needs of the professions specifically as this relates to quality assurance and providing quality healthcare services to those that we serve.

In this regard, in 2011, the former Minister of Health, Dr. A. Motsoaledi called the first Nursing Summit, to consult with the nursing profession on the revitalisation of the nursing profession in South Africa. From this Summit, the nurses of South Africa compiled a Nursing Compact that detailed measures that needed to be implemented in order to achieve the objective to renew the nursing practice in the country. The Summit saw the appointment of a Ministerial Task Team that compiled the National Strategic Plan for Nurse Education, Training and Practice.

The National Strategic Plan recommended that nursing education should offer higher education programmes that are in line with the National Qualification Framework Act 67 of 2008, in order to align the nursing profession with other professions in the country. In line with this, Nursing Services in the province made a proposal for the establishment of a single Gauteng College of Nursing (GCON) which was approved by HOD Prof Lukhele. The Nursing Education and Training Directorate supported by the Chief Directorate - Nursing and Quality benchmarked with other provinces in South Africa on the best practices regarding the merging of colleges to a single college in a province.

The promulgation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act. No. 67 of 2008 set in motion processes toward a unitary system of education which required that Nursing Education and Training aligns with the country's transformation of education agenda which talks to the implementation of a single coordinated system of higher education as per the White Paper 3 on Transformation of Education in South Africa.

Public Nursing Colleges in Gauteng were thus compelled to initiate processes towards being recognized as higher education institutions in order to become legitimized to continue with the education and training of

nurses. The Gauteng Public Nursing Colleges began preparations for the programme and institutional accreditation towards the latter half of the 2018 academic year.

The Gauteng College of Nurses has since become the umbrella organisation for known nursing colleges namely; Chris Hani Baragwanath and its two campuses Bonalesedi and Rahima Moosa, Ann Latsky, SG Lourens and Garankuwa, these now all being regarded as campuses under the single Gauteng College of Nursing administration. The responsibilities of the college will be to ensure standardization of systems and procedures including standard operation procedures for staffing, recruitment of students, curriculum development and implementation, targets and quality assurance.

The Gauteng College of Nursing has received full accreditation from the Council on Higher Education (CHE), South African Nursing Council and registered by the South African Qualifications Authority. One of the requirements as according to Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act. 101 of 1997) is the development of the Statute for the College, which has been developed. Today's programme is aimed to officially approve the statute as a legal document that mandates the processes of the GCON.

Although the Gauteng College of Nursing will be launched in due time, there has been an urgency for the statute be signed to allow the processes of centralising functions of the campuses into one central unit, this specifically beneficial for the discontinuation of governance structures of the campuses, and the nomination of new central governance structures for example.

Signing the statute of the college before the launch will hasten the processes of centralising functions of the GCON. The college will be recognized as a centre of nursing education that shapes the future of excellent nurse practitioners, researchers and leaders for the global community, enhancing nursing practice in the global village.

The key principles driving the functionality of the Gauteng College of Nursing will include:

- Providing equal access to quality nursing education to a diverse student population;
- Practising transparent value-based leadership and management;

- Promoting scholarly activities to develop and sustain research capacity and promote evidence - based decision making and practice;
- Recruiting and empowering staff towards sustained competence, excellence and innovation;
- Ensuring that transformative and emerging teaching and learning environments support quality nursing education;
- Promoting life-long learning and continuing professional development;
- Responding to health needs through community engagement that embodies the ethics of care;
- Promoting the student agency, advocacy and service excellence in responding to contextual challenges.

These principles are in line with the broader strategic objectives of the Department which include improving clinical services, leadership & governance, health promotion and the National Health Insurance. Nurses are indeed the foundation upon which healthcare services stand globally. The year 2020 has been declared by the World Health Organisation as the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. It is indeed ironic that it is in this very year that the world is confronted by a health pandemic that

has completely changed the way in which we do things across all sectors. The COVID-19 has not only taken away lives of more than 535 000 people globally, it has also highlighted the importance of frontline health-workers in the healthcare system, a significant amount of which are nurses. As we tackle this pandemic, it is important that we constantly think about ways in which nursing training and practice can be improved and strengthened for such crisis.

I look forward to the transformation of the nursing practice in the province and am convinced that the Gauteng College of Nursing is an important step towards this transformation. More so, as this relates to the strengthening of Primary Health Care in preparation for the roll-out of the National Health Insurance.

In closing, allow me to remind us all about the importance of the nursing practice in healthcare globally. As such, the work that is to be undertaken by the GCON is probably one of the key highlights for the province in this administration. We must as such take the responsibility to transform the nursing practice very seriously. A lot of work lies ahead, but we will be able to deliver better health outcomes in the province through this transformative process.

I would like to also thank the Interim College Council of GCON for providing Strategic Leadership and Policy Solutions on matters of the establishment of GCON, ensuring that the work of ICC is characterized by quality Output and tangible deliverables. Let us continue to work together towards strengthening out primary health care services. May we be encouraged by this work to continue in the fight against COVID-19, indeed the raging storm is here, but we will surely overcome. The struggle for better health outcomes in Gauteng and in our country continues. Amandla!

I thank you.