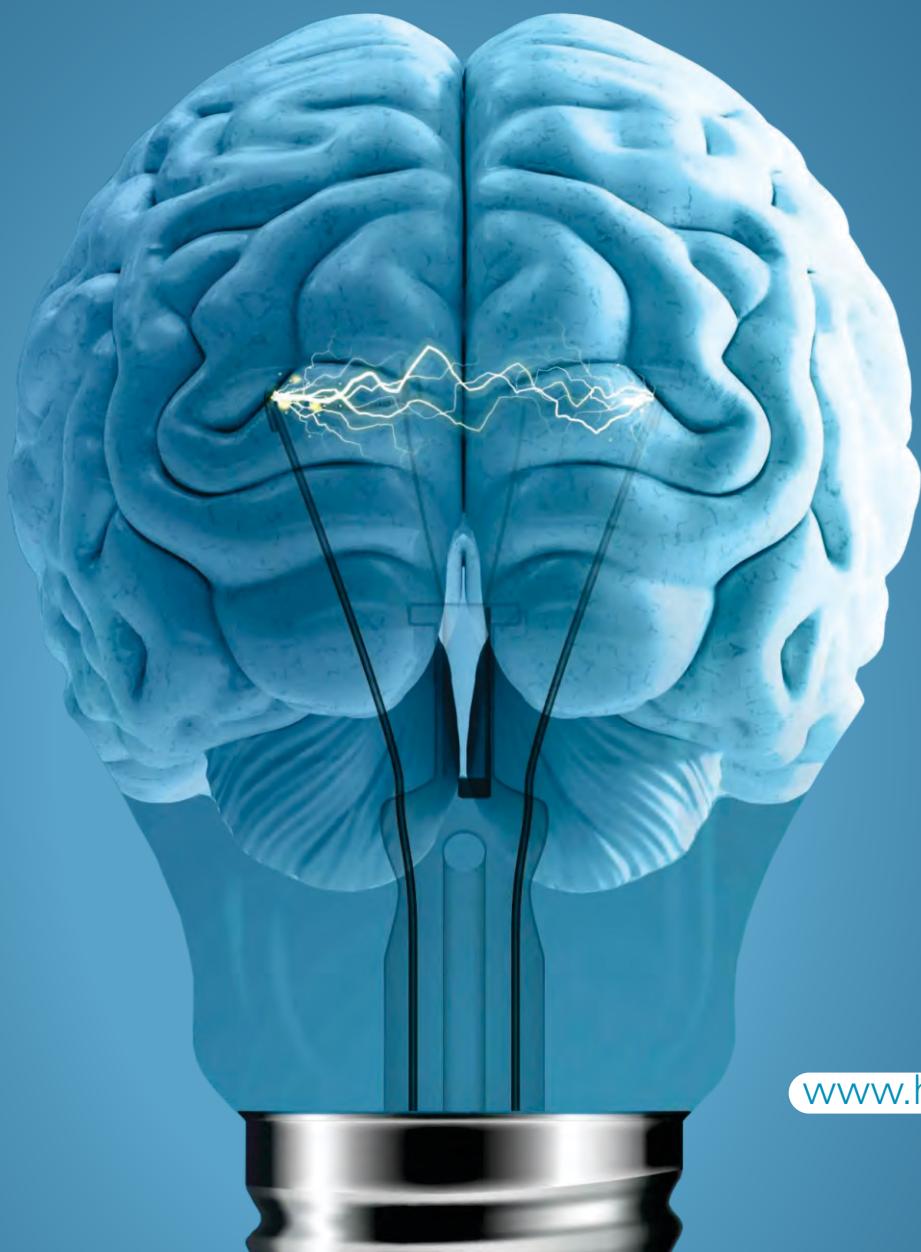


The **HealthProfessional**  
THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS AUTHORITY MAGAZINE 2025 Issue



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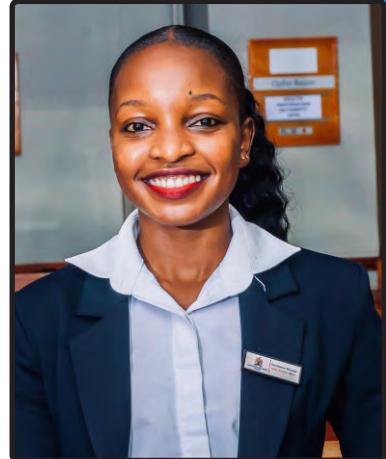
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# **Editor's Note**



Dear readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of The Health Professional, your go-to source for all things related to health regulation. In this edition, we will be delving into various aspects of health regulation and its impact on the healthcare industry. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, so does the need for effective health regulation. In our ever-changing society, it is crucial to have a robust framework in place to ensure the highest standards of care and safety for patients and healthcare professionals alike.

One key theme we will be focusing on in this edition is the importance of accountability in healthcare. In this edition we also explore other topics such as the interplay between technology and health regulation, neuropathic medicine, biological hazards, mental health, only to mention but a few.

As part of our ongoing commitment to promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, this edition includes feature articles from various healthcare perspectives. Our contributors include regulatory entities, medical professionals, and industry leaders, ensuring a well-rounded and comprehensive approach to the healthcare ecosystem.

We would like to express our gratitude to our contributors and editorial team for their hard work in putting together this edition. We hope that you find this edition of The Health Professional informative and thought-provoking. Our goal is to provide a platform for discussions, knowledge exchange, and critical analysis of issues surrounding the Zimbabwean health sector.

PS: Be sure to fill out the subscription form on our website to receive our newsletters. If you have any recommendations, please email us at [pr@hpa.co.zw](mailto:pr@hpa.co.zw).

**Ms. Persistance Muunga**  
Public Relations Officer

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# NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S OFFICE



Mrs. Clotilda Chimbwanda  
Secretary General  
Health Professions Authority

### **The Challenge of Evolution and the Need for Agility**

The healthcare sector is evolving at an unprecedented pace, and it is a fundamental challenge that regulation often lags behind innovation. This challenge is compounded by the fact that Zimbabwe's health sector operates as a largely self-regulatory environment, relying heavily on the integrity and professionalism of our registered practitioners. To stay ahead, the HPA cannot simply react to change. We must adopt a bottom-up approach, actively engaging with health professionals to understand emerging trends, technological advancements, and operational realities on the ground. This constant exchange ensures our standards are relevant, effective, and future proof. Our ultimate and unwavering mission through all our regulatory work is the protection of the Zimbabwean public.

### **Operations**

Through the years, the Authority has managed to carry out its core mandate of inspections and registration of health facilities as outlined in the table below:

	2022	2023	2024	2025*
New health facilities registered	564	604	579	808
Routine Inspections of registered facilities to check for standards maintenance	1,296	1,391	1,516	1,414
Investigative Inspections	51	34	29	30

\* Figures as at 31 October 2025.

We are currently observing an exhilarating and transformative period in Zimbabwe's healthcare infrastructure. This sector is witnessing a significant increase in new health facilities, with several being developed as state-of-the-art centres. This high-level investment and capacity building present a profound national opportunity: strategically leveraging these facilities can effectively convert outbound medical tourism into an inbound market, positioning Zimbabwe as a regional hub for quality healthcare. This pursuit of

excellence is a key economic and health objective for the nation.

While we champion this growth, our commitment to public safety requires relentless vigilance against malpractice. Through our rigorous routine inspections, the Authority has been actively engaged in protecting citizens from illegal operators. We have successfully 'sniffed out' and closed a number of bogus health facilities, working in close coordination with the police. These closures address operations functioning without the mandatory registration or those employing individuals masquerading as registered health professionals, thus eliminating serious risks to public health.

A parallel and urgent area of concern is the upsurge in 'beauty enhancement' procedures being conducted by unqualified, non-medical personnel. These illegal practitioners are utilizing injectables and medication that are designated for administration strictly by registered health professionals. This activity is a clear and serious contravention of Section 126 (2) (a) of the Health Professions Act (Chapter 27:19), which reserves specific medical acts exclusively for registered practitioners. HPA is intensifying its enforcement efforts to curtail these dangerous, illegal procedures and ensure professional integrity.

Looking ahead, the healthcare environment is set to be dramatically shaped by technology, particularly the rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This advancement introduces a complex global regulatory quandary: should regulatory interventions prioritize consumer protection through stringent oversight, or should they focus on promoting innovation by adopting a less stringent, more flexible approach?

The optimum strategy, in the view of the HPA, is to find the right regulatory balance between these two essential goals. Our ultimate responsibility is to facilitate and enable beneficial innovation, not to prohibit progress. However, this facilitation must always be executed within a framework that ensures the public is protected from unproven or unsafe practices. This measured, forward-looking approach will define our regulatory strategy for the next era of health practice.

### **Benchmarking**

The Authority is a member of the Association of Medical Councils in Africa (AMCOA) and International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA). Health has no borders, and these platforms pave the way for benchmarking and pushing of the health agenda in all participating countries in a bid to achieve a common quest of quality universal health coverage.

Both Associations focus on the following key elements,

- (a) Registration and regulation of health practitioners and health facilities.**
- (b) Promoting high standards of medical education and training.**
- (c) Exchange of information among medical regulatory authorities.**
- (d) Seeking to standardise health regulation by coming up with appropriate template protocols and policies.**

No entity can survive in a silo and as such, the Authority will continue to engage and work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure effective regulation of health care professionals and their institutions in an ethical, efficient and professional manner.



**Zimbabwean Delegates Attending the year 2025 27th AMCOA Conference in Uganda**

From left: Allied Health Practitioners Council Registrar, Health Professions Authority Secretary General, Medical and Dental Practitioners Council Registrar, Medical and Dental Practitioners Council Chairperson, Africa Clinical Research Network Policy and Advocacy Manager

# INSPECTORATE COMPLIANCE AND STATISTICS

By Ms Reggie Mutindiri: Deputy Secretary General



Organizational compliance with laws, industrial standards, procedures, and enterprise architectures has become a highly relevant topic for both practitioners and academics.

However, both the fundamental insights into compliance as a concept and the tactics for bringing an organization into a compliant state have been described in a fragmented manner.

International and domestic laws and regulations, industry-wide standards and best practices, organizational rules and procedures, and enterprise architecture principles and models can all require organizational units, projects, and employees to conform to norms.

The topic of compliance has fascinated society for centuries. It is, therefore, necessary for policymakers to actively pursue and monitor compliance. This is also true in an organizational context, as compliance with laws and regulations may be in the best interest of the organization.

This makes compliance a strategic issue in the current era, especially considering the costs organizations must pay for their compliance with the law. It is not only the right thing to do but it is also the most responsible thing a business operator can do.

In Zimbabwe like in any other country, compliance with statutory laws and regulations is crucial in the health sector to ensure the provision of high-quality healthcare and the protection of patients' rights.

The health sector is responsible for ensuring that healthcare services are provided in a safe and effective manner. By complying with laws and regulations, healthcare providers can ensure that they are following standard practices and protocols designed to protect patients from harm.

For example, compliance with laws regarding infection control and patient safety measures can help prevent the spread of diseases and minimize potential risks during medical procedures. This ensures that patients receive the best possible care and can trust the healthcare system.

Secondly, compliance with statutory laws and regulations promotes transparency and accountability

in the health sector. Laws and regulations define the roles and responsibilities of healthcare providers, ensuring that they are accountable for their actions.

By complying with these laws, healthcare professionals are required to maintain accurate records and documentation, be transparent about their treatments and interventions, and protect patients' privacy and confidentiality.

This transparency and accountability not only builds trust between healthcare providers and patients, but also allows for effective oversight and regulation of the health sector by governing bodies.

Furthermore, compliance with statutory laws and regulations promotes professionalism and ethical conduct. Laws and regulations in the health sector often include codes of conduct and ethical guidelines that healthcare professionals must abide by.

These codes ensure that healthcare providers act in the best interests of patients, maintain professional boundaries, and uphold moral and ethical principles. By complying with these laws, healthcare professionals demonstrate their commitment to ethical practice and contribute to maintaining the integrity of the healthcare system.

Compliance is a sign of good corporate citizenship which is based on an ethical foundation.

Non-compliance with statutory laws and regulations in the health sector can have severe consequences. It can result in substandard healthcare services, violations of patients' rights or legal action against the practitioner.

It must be noted that a law must be honoured and respected; it is different from a rule or a code. A law is not on a "comply or explain" basis but it is actually "comply or else" in nature.

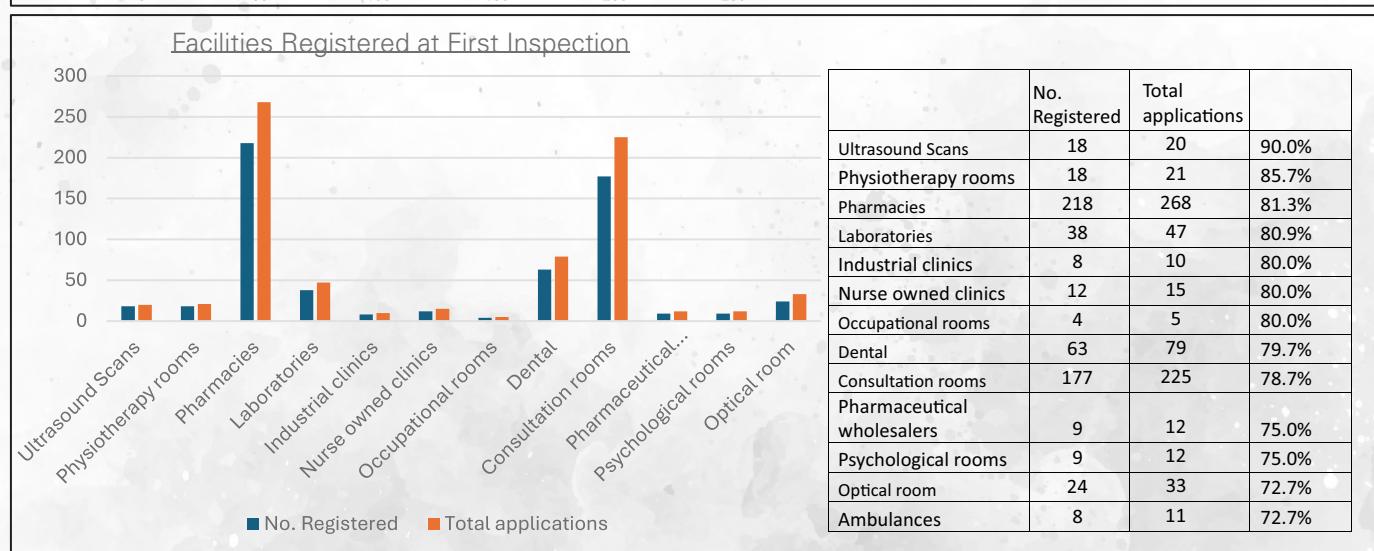
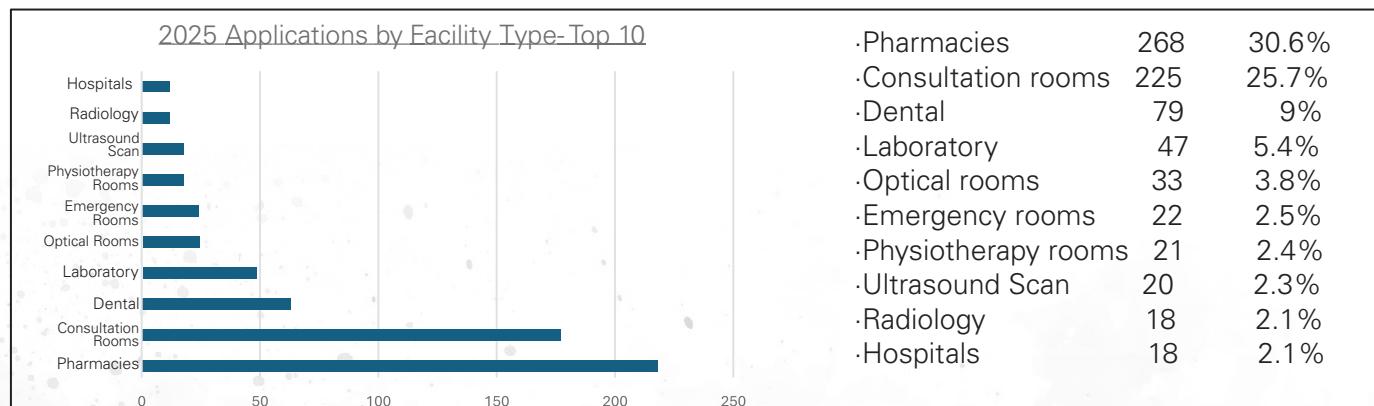
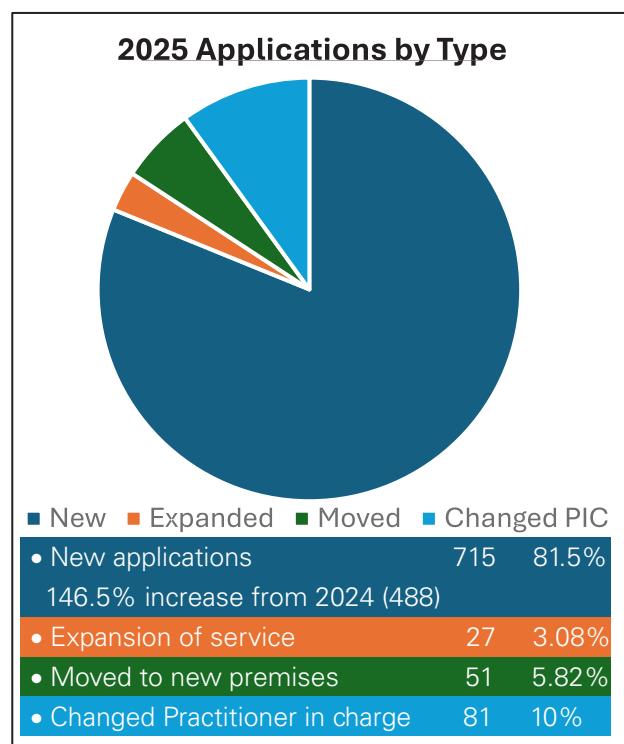
Many operators have proven to be reluctant to research and comply with laws applicable to them in the notion that if authorities catch up on them, they can simply hide behind claiming ignorance of the law in question and they faithfully believe they can get away with that.

Unfortunately, at law, *ignorantia juris non excusat* (a Latin phrase translated, Ignorance of the law is not an excuse.)

## Inspectorate department statistics as at 30 November 2025

➤ New applications received	832
➤ Initial inspections conducted	782
➤ Pending initial inspections	50
➤ Certificates issued	4037
➤ Routine inspections conducted	1470
➤ Investigation inspections conducted	42
➤ Closures	44

(all closed facilities were not registered with the authority).



# HPA EMBRACES DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Health Professions Authority Zimbabwe (HPA) has taken significant strides towards modernizing its operations, with a focus on enhancing convenience and efficiency for healthcare practitioners. A key initiative in this digital transformation is the implementation of an online system designed to streamline the renewal process for licenses and registrations. Recognizing the evolving needs of its stakeholders, HPA developed a user-friendly online platform that allows practitioners to complete their renewal procedures from the comfort of their homes or offices. Gone are the days of cumbersome paperwork and time-consuming in-person visits.

## Key Features of the Digital Renewal System:

- i) Document Upload: Practitioners can conveniently upload all required documents electronically. This includes city health reports, practising certificates and proof of payment.
- ii) Online Payment: The system integrates secure online payment gateways, enabling practitioners to pay their renewal fees directly through the platform. This provides a hassle-free and efficient payment experience.
- iii) Secure Database: All uploaded documents and personal information are stored in a secure database, ensuring confidentiality and data integrity.

## Benefits for Health Practitioners:

- i) Increased Convenience: The online system eliminates the need for physical visits and reduces paperwork, saving practitioners valuable time and resources.
- ii) Faster Processing: Digital submissions and online payments expedite the renewal process, leading to faster turnaround times.
- iii) Enhanced Accessibility: The system is accessible 24/7, allowing practitioners to complete their renewals at their convenience.
- iv) Reduced Administrative Burden: The automated processes reduce the administrative burden on both practitioners and HPA.

## HPA's Commitment to Innovation

The implementation of this digital renewal system reflects HPA's commitment to innovation and its dedication to providing efficient and accessible services to healthcare practitioners. By embracing technology, HPA is paving the way for a more streamlined and responsive regulatory environment, one that minimizes administrative burdens and maximizes practitioner focus on patient care. This transition signifies a profound shift towards a future where regulatory processes are not only faster but also more transparent and adaptable to the evolving needs of the healthcare sector.



Furthermore, this digital initiative underscores HPA's proactive approach to staying abreast of technological advancements, ensuring that healthcare professionals benefit from contemporary solutions that enhance their professional lives. The system is designed with user-centricity in mind, incorporating intuitive interfaces and robust security measures to guarantee a smooth and secure renewal process.

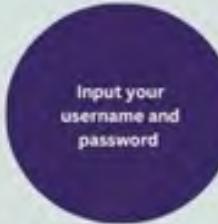
HPA encourages all health practitioners to embrace this digital transformation and utilize the online renewal

system for a seamless and efficient experience. Details on how to access the new system are available on the HPA website, alongside comprehensive guides and support resources. This digital shift represents more than just a procedural change; it embodies a collaborative effort between the HPA and its practitioners to foster a more connected and responsive healthcare ecosystem. By adopting this system, practitioners contribute to a collective advancement that ultimately benefits the entire healthcare community.



### Accessing the HPAZ Portal : A Step-by-Step Guide



- Step 1:  logon to : [www.hpa.co.zw](http://www.hpa.co.zw) or scan the QR code
- Step 2:  Click Portal (top right corner)
- Step 3:  Click HPA IMS Login
- Step 4:  Input your username and password
- Step 5:  Login and upload documents

**NB:** New Practitioners are required to use the forgot password feature to get a one time pin (OTP) for generating of the new login credentials



## HEALTH PROFESSIONS AUTHORITY ZIMBABWE

### HPA 2026 Renewal Notice:

Please note that all 2026 renewals are now conducted strictly online.

For your convenience, Paynow is now integrated for instant payments.



For a walkthrough of the process, please view our step-by-step guide on our YouTube channel: @health professions authority Zimbabwe

# Uterine Fibroids

By Dr. T.L. Magwali



Fibroids are growths that can appear in the muscle of the uterus, and they are more common in black women. Although the exact cause of this condition is unknown, genetic predispositions are believed to be involved. Another belief is that being overweight poses a risk. 30 to 50 percent of women are impacted by them. Their size varies from tiny seedlings to more than 10cm in diameter. A woman can have only one or several fibroids. Their position in the uterus varies. They may be disposed towards the inner cavity of the uterus (submucosal) or embedded within the muscle of the uterus (intra-myometrial) or be more towards the surface of the uterus that is towards the abdominal cavity (subserous).

In some instances, fibroids cause no symptoms at all. In some women they can cause the menstrual periods to become very heavy. The patient affected may become anaemic due to the excessive blood loss. This may cause feelings of fatigue, dizziness and in some cases fainting attacks. The heavy menstrual periods can be accompanied by pain. Fibroids may also cause irregular menstrual bleeding. Submucosal fibroids are the ones likely to be associated with heavy menstrual periods or irregular uterine bleeding.

Fibroids that cause pressure on the openings of the fallopian tubes into the uterus on both sides may affect the woman's ability to conceive. Submucosal fibroids may also lead to repeated miscarriage as they may interfere with development of the placenta. Huge fibroids may restrict the cavity of the uterus and result in premature labour.

Huge fibroids that distort the cavity of the uterus may also cause the placenta to be implanted in an abnormally low position in the uterus (placenta praevia). They may also cause the placenta to separate before the baby is born (placental abruption). Both these conditions may result in bleeding during pregnancy. Fibroids may also prevent the uterus from contracting effectively. This may affect the progress of labour resulting in caesarean delivery. Failure to contract effectively may also result in excessive bleeding after the baby has been born (postpartum haemorrhage).

The blood supply to the uterus increases significantly during pregnancy (up to 800mls per minute towards the

end of pregnancy). This may cause fibroids to grow bigger and to cause pain during the course of the pregnancy.

The health care system should be consulted when one suspects that they have fibroids. When they are large the uterus can be felt on examination of the abdomen. However, when they are small, it is possible that the uterus will not be felt per abdomen. Where there is heavy menstrual bleeding a full blood count is done to detect whether or not there is anaemia. An ultrasound done over the abdomen and pelvis will confirm the presence of fibroids. An ultrasound scan will also report on their size, number and their location within the uterus. More advanced imaging such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan can be done to further characterize the fibroids if required.

If they are causing no symptoms at all or are just causing mild symptoms, fibroids may require no treatment. However, when they are causing symptoms the treatment options include surgery to remove the fibroids (myomectomy) or to remove the uterus (hysterectomy). The decision to do either myomectomy or hysterectomy is based on the size and number of the fibroids, where they are located within the uterus and the patient's future fertility desires.

Non-surgical treatments for fibroids have increasingly become available. Pharmacological agents called gonadotrophin releasing hormone analogues (GnRH analogues) suppress production of the female hormone oestrogen to the body. This will cause the fibroid or fibroids to shrink in size. The treatment course is over a period of four to six months. After the treatment course, however, the fibroids tend to grow again to their original size. This class of agents is therefore mostly used to reduce the size of fibroids before surgery, with the surgery being performed soon after the treatment course is completed.

Uterine artery embolization is a radiological technique where imaging is used to direct microscopic crystals into the arteries that supply the uterus with blood (the uterine arteries). This will reduce the blood supply to the uterus resulting in the shrinkage of fibroids. Other techniques that may be coming our way soon are ultrasound focussed ablation of the fibroids and radiofrequency ablation. In ultrasound focussed

ablation, the fibroid is destroyed by ultrasound waves focussed to its centre using MRI guidance. In radiofrequency ablation, radiofrequency energy is delivered into the fibroid through electrodes with or without imaging guidance.

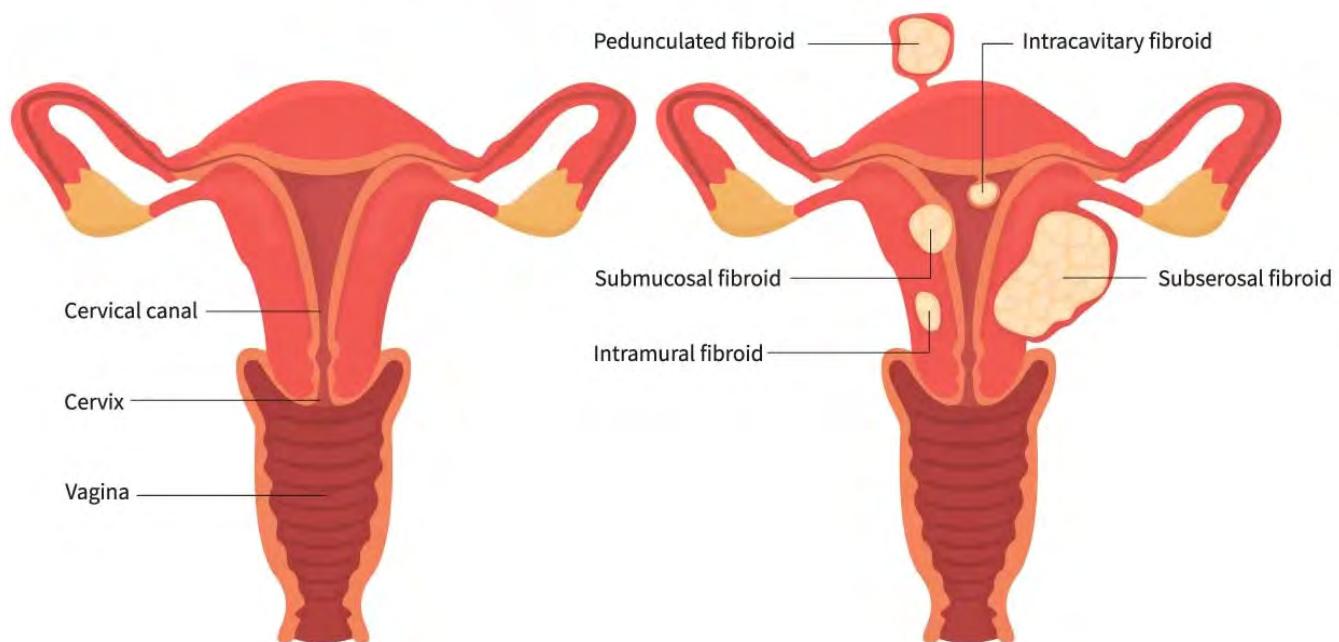
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#### Biography

Dr. T.L. Magwali is an Obstetrician/Gynaecologist who works for the University of Zimbabwe as a lecturer and for the Division of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Parirenyatwa Central Hospital. He has a special interest in both benign gynaecological conditions and gynaecological oncology.

## UTERINE FIBROIDS



# Naturopathic Medicine

By Katie Rose (Acting Registrar)



## WHAT IS NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE?

Naturopathic medicine is a distinct primary health care profession, emphasizing prevention, treatment and optimal health through the use of therapeutic methods and substances that encourage individuals' inherent self-healing process. The process of naturopathic medicine includes modern and traditional, natural, scientific and practical methods.

Naturopathic practice includes the following diagnostic and therapeutic modalities: clinical and laboratory diagnostic testing if needed, nutritional medicine, botanical medicine, naturopathic physical medicine, public health measures, hygiene, counselling, homeopathy, acupuncture, prescription of natural medications, oral medications and herbal supplementation.

## THE SIX PRINCIPLES OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

### The Healing Power of Nature

Naturopathic medicine recognises the ability for the body to heal itself. The inherent self-healing process in people is ordered and intelligent. Naturopathic Physicians act to identify and remove obstacles to healing and recovery and to facilitate and augment this inherent self-healing process.

### Identify and Treat the Causes

The Naturopathic Physician seeks to identify and remove the underlying causes of the illness rather than to merely eliminate or suppress symptoms.

### First Do No Harm

Naturopathic Physicians follow three guidelines to avoid harming the patient:

- Utilise methods and medicinal substances which minimise the risk of harmful side effects using the least force necessary to diagnose and treat;
- Avoid when possible the harmful suppression of symptoms;
- Acknowledge, respect and work with individuals' personal requirement and self-healing process.

### Doctor as Teacher

Naturopathic Physicians educate their patients and encourage self-responsibility for health. They also recognise and employ the therapeutic potential of the Doctor-Patient relationship.

### Treat the Whole Person

The term 'Holistic' means 'Whole'. Naturopathic Physicians treat each patient by taking in to account the individual physical, mental, emotional, genetic, spiritual, environmental and social current status as well as other factors.

### Prevention

Naturopathic Physicians emphasize the prevention of disease by assessing risk factors, heredity and susceptibility to disease, and by making appropriate interventions in partnership with their patients to prevent illness. If one can prevent illness from occurring in the first instance, there will be few or no symptoms to cure.

### WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR FIRST NATUROPATHIC CONSULTATION

During your first visit, you will meet your Naturopathic Physician who will lead a detailed discussion about your health concerns. Be prepared to discuss certain aspects of your life that you may not necessarily associate with your physical health, such as diet, sleep habits, stress levels, work and social life. This assists the Physician in gaining a full understanding of how your illness may be presenting itself, determine the underlying cause(s) and create an individualised treatment plan, involving you in your own health programme to learn how to make effective, educated, self-care decisions that can prevent future health problems.

All qualified Naturopathic Physicians are required by the Health Professions Act, Section VI, Chapter 27:19 to register with the Natural Therapists Council of Zimbabwe (NTCZ) for a practicing licence. Contact Mrs Rose, Councillor and Acting Registrar at [registrar.ntcz@gmail.com](mailto:registrar.ntcz@gmail.com) for details of fully qualified, registered Practitioners in Zimbabwe.

This article is dedicated to the late Dr Nyarai Paweni N.D, Councillor and Vice Chair of NTCZ who sadly passed away in 2023. She was a committed, motivated, passionate and well-respected Naturopathic Physician who touched many lives, including her patients. Her knowledge was remarkable, and her legacy will live on through the future education of others in the benefits of natural medicine and therapy.

# DISABILITY A HEALTH CONCERN?

By Peter Masendeke –  
Former HPA Board Member



The United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines disability as, "long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with other people." Given the definition of disability it is clear to see that disability is a concerning phenomenon which cannot be wished away in society without coming up with measures to address it. It is also evident from the given definition of disability that there is a close relation between disability and health.

The modern-day view of disability has adopted a human rights approach which advocates for empowerment of people with disabilities so that they become independent in their daily lives. This is a shift from viewing disability as a simple "diagnosis and cure" phenomenon. In as much as we are conceding from the onset that disability is a health concern as outlined by the social model of disability, the modern-day human rights approach to disability should be examined to ascertain the extent of the health sector's involvement in disability issues. Not only are the various types of disabilities closely linked to different ailments as defined in the health purview, but other societal facets are also spelling out a more definitive involvement of the health sector in disability issues.

According to the past Zimbabwean census, there are nearly 1.9 million people with disabilities in the country. This includes people with albinism and some with invisible disabilities. Considering Zimbabwe's total population of around 14 million people, the percentage of people with disabilities in the country is too significant and should not therefore be ignored. The government of Zimbabwe has taken deliberate steps to include disability issues in all national planning and policy concerns. The health sector is also among the targeted sectors which should also address any disability concerns.

The first major indicator from the Government of Zimbabwe that the health sector should adopt disability concerns is the Constitution of Zimbabwe itself which speaks to nondiscrimination of disability concerns by all Government institutions as outlined in Sections 22, 76 and 83(d). Section 83(d) specifically outlines that the State should take appropriate measures in making sure that persons with disabilities are given "access to medical, psychological and functional treatment." The health sector is being showcased in this instance as an adopter of disability concerns.

The National Disability Policy which was launched by the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Dr ED Mnangagwa in 2021 further provides a guide of how deep of an extent should the health sector be concerned about disability issues. Section 3.7 of the National Disability Policy is clear as it outlines in section 3.7.10 that the "Curriculum of all health students and allied health professional courses must include the subject of disability as an examinable subject, including on ensuring accessible information and communications and the rights of persons with disabilities in healthcare settings." This and other pronouncements in the National Disability Policy are a definitive government showcase of how deep the government of Zimbabwe believes the health sector ought to delve into disability concerns.

Various initiatives like health institutions which have been built and strictly dedicated to the correction of different disabilities also indicate how disability concerns have been embraced in the health sector. For example, in Bulawayo there is Cure Children's Hospital. A lot of corrective surgeries on children with deformed limbs have been successfully carried out there by reducing numbers of persons with disabilities.

As the nation approaches the stated Vision 2030 it is imperative that disability concerns continue to be fully adopted by the health sector and to a larger extent for that matter. Not only does the address of disability concerns help in boosting the already vulnerable health of people with disabilities but can encourage people with disabilities to be self-sufficient thereby reducing government expenditure on the vulnerable including the disabled.

Above-mentioned factors and other unmentioned ones point towards the unmistakable fact that disability concerns are indeed a purview of the health sector among its many other mandates. The health sector should encompass disability concerns in its "to do" list. As the situation stands, the Government of Zimbabwe has made giant strides in making sure that the disability concerns are an integral part of the health sector agenda. Even though more could be done in terms of addressing the disability concerns, what is being done is a commendable feat. It now rests with the individual health care professionals particularly in private practice to personally ensure accessibility in every way to their services by people with disabilities.

## Biography

Mr Peter Pikisai Masendeke is a University of Zimbabwe graduate who holds qualifications in Administration and Labour Law. He is also a seasoned College lecturer with Technical and Vocational Education qualifications. His personal interests lie in Disability Advocacy as witnessed by several positions that he holds which speak to the advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities as well as their empowerment. He is the Health Professions Authority Board member representing persons with disabilities. He is also the National Representative for all College lecturers with disabilities under the ambit of College Lecturers Association of Zimbabwe. Mr Masendeke is a projects coordinator for St Daniel's Rehabilitation and Vocational Center, a fully registered Private Voluntary Organisation for children with disabilities. He is also a patron for Albinism Alive Initiative which is a registered Trust for persons with albinism. He has authored a Disability Policy Handbook for College Lecturers Association of Zimbabwe highlighting rights of workers with disabilities in the workplace among other publications.



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# SELF-CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH: AN EXPLORATION OF WAYS TO ENHANCE MENTAL WELL-BEING

By Professor Herbert Zirima



By Professor  
Herbert Zirima

The World and Zimbabwe is currently grappling with a number of socio-economic problems which have a potential to negatively affect one's mental health. We are still recovering from COVID-19 mental health effects which include a significant rise in mental health disorders such as substance use disorder and suicidal behaviour. Majority of people are either directly or indirectly affected by one or more common mental health disorders. It is against that background that, now, more than ever before, practicing self-care is becoming critical when it comes to taking care of our mental health and even physical well-being.

For health practitioners, self-care is a necessity not a luxury. Since health care practitioners are responsible for taking care of others, they cannot help others unless they help themselves, in other words, they cannot pour from an empty cup. Self-care is not selfishness but a critical step in boosting mental and physical health. There is need to focus on those things that make you feel nourished, that give you meaning and that energises you to keep on keeping on. According to the definition from the World Health Organization, self-care refers to behaviors you do to take care of your own health and can include hygiene, nutrition, leisure activities, sports, exercise, seeking professional healthcare services when needed, and much more. In this brief article, I will explore some tips to help take care of your mental health.

Focus on things you can control. A number of things that are happening now are out of your control, they are things that you may not have influence on, no matter how much you wish to. It is easy to feel stuck in 'mud' when you focus on what you cannot control. Indeed, the more you focus on things outside of your control, the more likely you are to feel anxious, angry, and disappointed. On the other hand, when you focus on what you can control, you can feel good, confident, empowered, and a sense of achievement. At this moment a number of people are worried about the future of their jobs, some about their educational programmes but with all that worry, there is nothing much that you probably can do change that future. It may be necessary not to worry but rather do something that you have control over.

Create a "no" list. You do not have to agree to do

everything that you are asked to do and you may have to say no to things that you used to do but giving you unnecessary pressure. It is more than okay to set healthy boundaries for things that no longer serve you. This can be anything from not checking your email at a certain time to not attending every event you are invited to. You may need to create time for yourself, say no to online meetings that occur during your scheduled family time. You may also need to say no to constantly checking on social media.

Get enough sleep. Adults usually need seven to eight hours of sleep each night or at least every 24 hours. If you find you are struggling to fall asleep or stay asleep, try limiting technology use prior to bed and having a consistent night routine. Having a cup of (decaffeinated) tea and reading are great ways to wind down and signal your brain that it is time to get ready for bed.

Watch or read something uplifting. Distraction can be a good thing. Watch something that you find uplifting and allow yourself to zone out from what is going on in the world. You may consider reading something diverted from your usual line of work, just to divert.

Be kind to yourself. Most of the time, we are too hard on ourselves. You spend most of the time with yourself, so make sure your relationship with the person in the mirror is a positive one. This is something you can practice and can be as simple as saying you are proud of yourself today. You can also consider rewarding yourself whenever you have achieved something.

Exercise as appropriate. Exercise is as good for our mental health as it is for our physical health. It increases serotonin levels, leading to improved mood and energy. Choose something you enjoy — this can be anything from running around with your children or playing fetch with your dog, to lifting weights.

Stay connected. It is important to always be in touch with those that we love, family and friends. Even with geographical distances, you can stay connected to friends and loved ones through technologies like video calls and phone calls. Lean on your social support networks if you feel overwhelmed or lonely. Family and friends can be a strong source of social support in both good and bad times.

Listen to music. Music helps to bring the 'feel good effect' to our lives and helps to improve memory. Music can relax the mind, energize the body, and even help people better manage pain. So, you need to come up with a play list of your favourite music to keep you energised.

It will be good to try and implement these self-care tips as they are most likely going to help you through different phases of life. Self-care is also a very critical part of boosting our mental health. For health care practitioners, self-care is a necessity as they cannot effectively help others unless they are well themselves. However, should you feel the need for additional support, do not be afraid to get support from a mental health expert.

Prof Herbert Zirima is a Registered Educational Psychologist. He can be contacted on [hzirima@gzu.ac.zw](mailto:hzirima@gzu.ac.zw)

Once you have claimed your business listings, you will have a front-row seat to protect your company's image, since you will be able to flag fraudulent reviews and respond to customer issues in real time.

Your corporate reputation is the collective view of the company's previous interactions as well as the anticipation for its future activities.

Your company's reputation is most likely its most valuable intangible asset. When your business is perceived as dependable, transparent, and accountable, it can distinguish itself from competitors, providing a tangible edge in your market.

There are numerous advantages to online reputation management, however, the key reasons why most businesses employ it are:

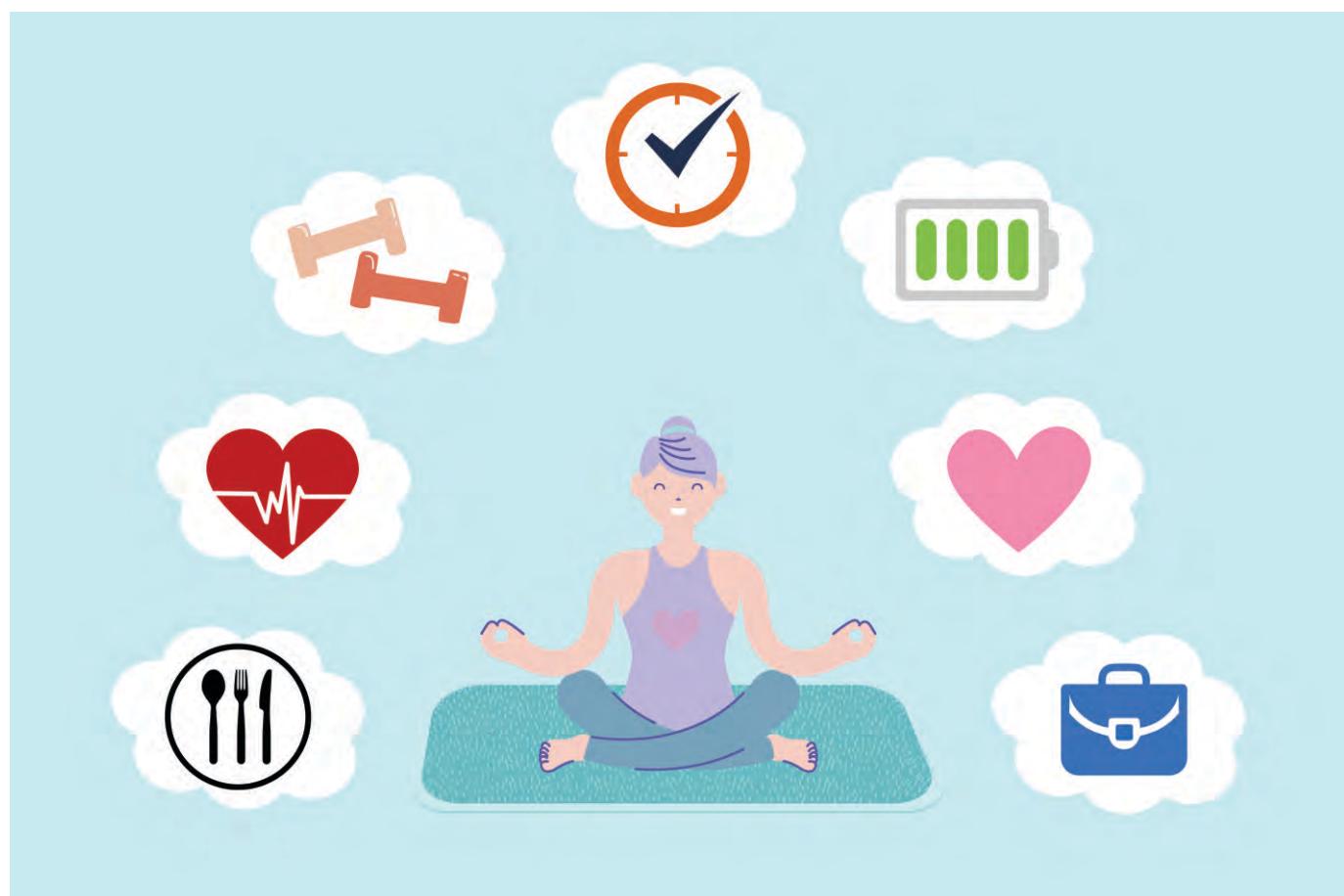
To increase credibility for the brand and attract customers.

To increase profitability while also attracting and retaining talented people.

However, five major factors have the most influence on your company's reputation:

- The level of quality of your goods and services,
- Your workers and customer service quality
- The reliability of the services you offer, your financial performance, and the reputation of your CEO.

Consumers interact with your company mostly because of its products and services. If you provide a terrible product or service, people will find out quickly, especially if an unhappy consumer shares their experience online. So, in conclusion, guard your reputation jealously!





## HEALTH PROFESSIONS AUTHORITY ZIMBABWE



The Board, Management, and staff of the Health Professions Authority Zimbabwe (HPA) extend its warmest congratulations to Mr. Farai Machinga on his appointment as the substantive Chief Executive Officer of the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC).

This appointment is a testament of Mr. Machinga's outstanding dedication and expertise within the health sector. We look forward to continuing our close partnership with the ZNFPC under his guidance. We wish him all the very best, success, and fulfilment in this significant new leadership endeavour.

# Congratulations



Health Professions Authority (HPA) Zimbabwe, in its unwavering commitment to fostering a transparent and ethical healthcare sector, successfully hosted a crucial integrity training session and integrity pledge signing ceremony. This significant event saw robust participation from HPA staff members and representatives from the Health Professions Councils, underscoring a united front against corruption.

The intensive training session was expertly facilitated providing invaluable insights into the pervasive nature and detrimental effects of corruption on society and public services. The session extensively covered critical areas such as the abuse of public office for private gain, highlighting that corruption often germinates as a moral issue before escalating into a criminal offence.

Furthermore, ZACC illuminated the far-reaching economic, business, political, legal, and social impacts of corruption, emphasizing its corrosive effect on national development and public trust. A key message from ZACC was the importance for institutions to proactively invite the Commission for compliance spot checks, viewing these as a measure of transparency and dedication to upholding ethical standards. The need for establishing dedicated Integrity Committees within organizations to champion ethical conduct and identify potential risks was also strongly emphasized.

### BENEFITS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING

The primary objectives of this vital training and pledge signing initiative were to:

- i) Enhance Awareness: Deepen understanding among health professionals and regulatory bodies about the various forms, drivers, and consequences of corruption.
- ii) Promote Ethical Conduct: Reinforce the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability in the professional conduct of all members.
- iii) Strengthen Compliance: Equip participants with the knowledge and tools to comply with national anti-corruption laws and institutional policies.
- iv) Foster a Culture of Integrity: Cultivate a proactive and preventative approach to corruption, ensuring that

ethical considerations are at the forefront of all decision-making processes.

- v) Formalize Commitment: Secure a tangible, public commitment from leaders and representatives to combat corruption actively through the signing of integrity pledges.

The session culminated in a solemn signing of integrity pledges by all attending HPA and Council members. This act signifies a profound personal and collective commitment to upholding ethical governance, ensuring public trust, and contributing to a corruption-free healthcare environment in Zimbabwe. The training session was well-attended by representatives from a wide array of our esteemed Health Professions Councils, namely:

- Nurses Council of Zimbabwe
- Medical Laboratory and Clinical Scientists Council of Zimbabwe
- Pharmacists Council of Zimbabwe
- Medical Rehabilitation Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe
- Environmental Health Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe
- Medical and Dental Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe
- Allied Health Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe

The enthusiastic participation from these critical regulatory bodies highlights a shared dedication to strengthening integrity across the entire spectrum of health professions. HPA remains committed to leading by example and fostering an environment where integrity is not just an ideal, but a lived reality.

We extend our sincere gratitude to ZACC for their invaluable partnership in this crucial endeavour, and to all attendees for their commitment to a more ethical and accountable health sector. This collaborative integrity training and pledge signing marks a significant step forward in our collective efforts to ensure a healthcare system built on trust and accountability. HPA, alongside the Councils, is dedicated to translating these commitments into tangible actions that protect public health and uphold the highest ethical standards.



## HPA INSPECTORS COMPLETE ZRP CID TRAINING TO ENHANCE PUBLIC PROTECTION

The Health Professions Authority (HPA) is pleased to announce that its team of Inspectors successfully completed a critical five-day Criminal Investigation Department (CID) training workshop, significantly strengthening the Authority's capacity for enforcement and public protection. Held at Mkushi Academy in Harare, the workshop was a product of collaboration with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP). Our inspectors were privileged to be trained by some of the country's most experienced CID officers, providing them with essential, real-world investigative and legal expertise.

The comprehensive training reinforced and expanded the inspectors' core responsibilities, focusing on the legally grounded and analytical processes necessary for effective regulatory oversight.

Key areas covered included:

- i) Conducting Rigorous Investigations: Deep dives into Section 26 of the Health Professions Act and techniques for identifying and mitigating health risks and hazards, ensuring effective enforcement actions.
- ii) Performing Onsite Inspections: Mastering the systematic approach to visual facility checks, reviewing records, observing clinical practices, and correctly capturing evidence through photography and sampling.
- iii) Expert Court Appearance: Training on dockets compilation (ensuring facts follow a chronological order) and delivering expert testimony in court to support prosecution and enforcement actions against non-compliant entities.

The Authority reaffirms its commitment to protecting the public by ensuring that all healthcare services are provided by accredited professionals operating within registered and compliant facilities.

A major focus of the workshop was instilling the core principles of investigation necessary for fair and accountable operations. These principles include: Thoroughness and Accuracy (securing all necessary evidence), Confidentiality (particularly in protecting whistleblowers), Fairness (treating all parties equally), and respecting the fundamental principle of Presumption of Innocence throughout the investigative process. Detailed procedures for the legal Searches and Seizures of evidence were also covered.

By investing in this high-level training, the HPA is better equipped to ensure accountability, improve community safety, and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement across the health sector.

The Authority reaffirms its commitment to protecting the public by ensuring that all healthcare services are provided by accredited professionals operating within registered and compliant facilities.

# HPA STAFF UNDERGO VITAL HIV/AIDS TRAINING



Health Professions Authority (HPA) Zimbabwe reinforces its dedication to a healthier nation through continuous internal development. HPA staff members participated in a vital HIV/AIDS training session, a testament to HPA's commitment to equipping its team with the latest knowledge and skills to enhance Zimbabwe's ongoing fight against HIV/AIDS.

## Why This Training Was Essential

Zimbabwe has made significant strides in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic, yet it remains a critical public health challenge. According to UNAIDS 2023 statistics, approximately 1.3 million people in Zimbabwe are living with HIV, with 15,000 new HIV infections annually and around 19,000 AIDS-related deaths. While impressive progress has been made, with 95% of people living with HIV knowing their status and 95% of those identified accessing antiretroviral therapy (ART), continuous education and awareness are vital to maintain momentum and achieve an HIV-free generation.

As a regulatory body under the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC), HPA recognizes that its staff, though not always directly involved in clinical care, plays a crucial role in creating a supportive and informed environment for all health professionals and the public they serve. This training was designed to enhance our internal capacity and ensure that every HPA team member understands the evolving landscape of HIV/AIDS.

## Objectives of the Training

The comprehensive training session aimed to achieve several key objectives for HPA staff:

- **Update Knowledge:** Provide the latest information on HIV/AIDS prevention, transmission, treatment (including ART advancements), and care strategies.
- **Reduce Stigma and Discrimination:** Foster an environment of empathy and non-discrimination towards people living with HIV, countering misconceptions and promoting respectful interactions within and outside the workplace.
- **Promote Awareness:** Equip staff with accurate information to serve as informed ambassadors in their professional and personal capacities, contributing to broader public health education.
- **Understand Policy Context:** Enhance understanding of national HIV/AIDS policies and guidelines, and HPA's role in regulating health professionals and institutions in line with these national priorities.
- **Support Wellness:** Encourage a culture of health and wellness within HPA, including promoting testing and access to care for all.

The training covered critical topics such as the current epidemiology of HIV in Zimbabwe, the principles of HIV testing services, treatment adherence, prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), and the importance of confidentiality and ethical considerations in handling HIV-related information.

# HPA, MDPCZ and MRPCZ Join Forces for Landmark 2025 Joint Annual General Meeting



Health Professions Authority Zimbabwe (HPA), in a strategic collaboration with the Medical and Dental Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe (MDPCZ) and the Medical Rehabilitation Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe (MRPCZ), successfully hosted a joint Annual General Meeting (AGM) on November 27, 2025, at the Monomotapa Hotel in Harare.

This landmark event represented a unified front for health regulation in Zimbabwe, streamlining the dialogue between healthcare regulators.

The gathering brought together an elite assembly of stakeholders, ranging from frontline medical practitioners to high-level policy makers. The presence of the Ministry of Health and Child Care leadership provided a strong sense of national direction, emphasizing that regulatory excellence is the bedrock of the government's vision for a modernized healthcare sector.

The discussions moved beyond routine administrative

updates, diving deep into the digital transformation of health regulation, the harmonization of practitioner standards, and the importance of inter-disciplinary collaboration.

The platform facilitated a robust exchange of ideas regarding the current challenges facing the workforce, including the retention of skilled practitioners and the adaptation to new medical technologies. Delegates engaged in spirited breakout sessions that addressed the evolving legal landscape of healthcare in Zimbabwe and the ethical implications of emerging clinical practices.

The collaborative atmosphere underscored a vital truth: a healthcare system is only as strong as its regulatory foundation. By sharing resources, data, and insights, regulatory bodies are better equipped to respond to the dynamic needs of the Zimbabwean population. The unified commitment voiced at the Monomotapa Hotel solidifies a path toward a more resilient, inclusive, and world-class healthcare system for all Zimbabweans.



# CHITUNGWIZA CENTRAL HOSPITAL JOINT CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN

On the 7th of March 2025, a powerful display of inter-agency cooperation unfolded at Chitungwiza Central Hospital as the Health Professions Authority of Zimbabwe (HPA), in concert with the Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ), and the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC), orchestrated a comprehensive joint cleanup campaign. This initiative was driven by a shared commitment to public health, aimed at rejuvenating the hospital environment, creating a cleaner and more conducive space for patients, healthcare professionals, and visitors alike.

The campaign's objectives were meticulously designed to achieve tangible and lasting improvements: to cultivate a culture of environmental stewardship within the healthcare sector, to significantly enhance the sanitation standards of the hospital grounds, and to fortify collaborative bonds between key healthcare organizations in support of community well-being. By pooling their resources and expertise, the participating entities sought to exemplify a unified dedication to fostering healthier communities, demonstrating that collective action can yield substantial positive outcomes. The cleanup efforts encompassed the meticulous removal of accumulated litter.

The advantages stemming from this collaborative endeavour extend far beyond the immediate visual improvements. Firstly, it served as a compelling demonstration of the transformative power of inter-agency synergy, showcasing how diverse organizations within the healthcare landscape can coalesce to achieve common, impactful goals. Secondly, it fostered a profound sense of community ownership and collective responsibility, inspiring hospital staff and local residents to take pride in and actively contribute to the maintenance of their environment.

Moreover, the campaign functioned as a potent public awareness initiative, underscoring the critical role of environmental hygiene in promoting holistic public health. The resounding success of this cleanup campaign underscores the HPA's unwavering commitment to not only regulating healthcare professions but also actively participating in the broader mission of enhancing community well-being. The HPA and its esteemed partners are dedicated to building upon this momentum, exploring further collaborative initiatives to foster a healthier and more prosperous Zimbabwe.



# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AT SALLY MUGABE CENTRAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

The Health Professions Authority of Zimbabwe (HPA) recently conducted a vital stakeholder engagement session at the Sally Mugabe Central Hospital School of Nursing, marking a significant step in strengthening communication and collaboration within the healthcare sector. This initiative aimed to foster a deeper understanding of the HPA's regulatory role, address pertinent concerns, and gather valuable feedback from nursing educators and students. The primary objectives of the engagement were to clarify HPA's mandate, promote adherence to professional standards, facilitate open dialogue on current challenges in nursing education, and explore avenues for mutual support and improvement.

By engaging directly with stakeholders at the grassroots level, HPA sought to ensure that regulatory practices are both effective and responsive to the realities faced by healthcare professionals in training. The engagement session featured interactive discussions, presentations on HPA regulations and guidelines, and opportunities for participants to raise questions and share their perspectives.

The outcomes of this initiative were highly positive, fostering a sense of mutual understanding and collaboration. Participants expressed appreciation for HPA's proactive approach and the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue. The session resulted in clarified understanding of HPA procedures, enhanced awareness of professional standards, and identification of key areas for collaborative improvement.

Additionally, HPA gained valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by nursing educators and students at Sally Mugabe Central Hospital School of Nursing, which will inform future regulatory practices and support initiatives. Ultimately, this stakeholder engagement reinforces the HPA's commitment to building strong partnerships within the healthcare community, ensuring that regulatory efforts contribute to the delivery of high-quality, safe, and ethical healthcare services in Zimbabwe.



# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF THE CYBER AND DATA PROTECTION ACT (SI 155 OF 2024) ON HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

By Tatenda Chiota (HPA IT Officer)



The digital transformation of healthcare has brought unprecedented advancements in patient care, operational efficiency, and medical innovation. However, this interconnected landscape also presents significant cybersecurity risks. Recognizing the critical need to safeguard sensitive patient data and ensure the resilience of healthcare infrastructure, the Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024 has been enacted.

This landmark legislation carries profound implications for all healthcare facilities, demanding a proactive and comprehensive approach to cyber and data security. This article aims to equip healthcare leaders and professionals with a clear understanding of the Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024, outlining its key impacts, potential benefits, and essential considerations for compliance and enhanced security posture.

## Understanding the Core of the Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024

The Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024 is designed to establish a robust framework for protecting digital assets and sensitive information within the healthcare sector. While the specific details may vary depending on the hypothetical jurisdiction, its core objectives likely include:

- Establishing Clear Cybersecurity Standards: Defining minimum security requirements and best practices for healthcare facilities to implement.
- Mandating Data Breach Reporting: Setting forth stringent guidelines and timelines for reporting data breaches to regulatory bodies and affected individuals.
- Enhancing Data Privacy and Individual Rights: Strengthening regulations around the collection, use, storage, and disclosure of personal health identifiable information (PHII).
- Promoting Accountability and Enforcement: Outlining penalties for non-compliance and establishing mechanisms for regulatory oversight.
- Fostering a Culture of Cybersecurity Awareness: Encouraging ongoing training and education for all healthcare personnel on cyber threats and data protection measures.

## Key Impacts on Healthcare Facilities

The Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024 necessitates significant adjustments in how healthcare facilities

operate and manage their digital environments:

- Implementation of Enhanced Cybersecurity Measures: Facilities will be required to implement specific security controls, including but not limited to:
  - a) Stronger Access Controls: Multi-factor authentication, role-based access.
  - b) Advanced Threat Detection and Prevention: Intrusion detection/prevention systems, anti-malware solutions.
  - c) Data Encryption: Encryption of data at rest and in transit.
  - d) Regular Security Assessments and Penetration Testing: Identifying and addressing vulnerabilities proactively.
  - e) Vulnerability Management Programs: Timely patching and updating of systems.
- Strict Data Breach Notification Requirements: The Act stipulates that in the event of a data breach the data controller should notify the authority in less than 24 hours.
- Enhanced data privacy and personal data protection: Facilities need to review and update their policies and procedures regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of PHI to align with the Act's requirements.
- Mandatory Cybersecurity Training and Awareness Programs: Healthcare facilities need to implement comprehensive and ongoing cybersecurity training programs for all employees, contractors, and anyone with access to patient data or critical systems.

## Significant Benefits for HealthCare Facilities

While compliance with the Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024 requires effort and investment, it offers substantial benefits for healthcare facilities:

- Enhanced Patient Trust and Confidence: Demonstrating a strong commitment to cybersecurity and data protection builds trust with patients, fostering stronger relationships and enhancing the facility's reputation.
- Reduced Risk of Costly Data Breaches: Implementing robust security measures significantly reduces the likelihood of data breaches, which can result in substantial financial losses due to fines, legal fees, reputational damage, and operational disruptions.

- Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Operations: Safeguarding digital systems and networks ensuring the continuity of essential healthcare services and protecting critical infrastructure from cyberattacks that could impact patient care.
- Improved Compliance Posture: Adhering to the Act's requirements helps facilities avoid potential penalties, legal actions, and regulatory scrutiny associated with non-compliance
- Strengthened Organizational Resilience: A proactive approach to cybersecurity enhances the overall resilience of the healthcare facility, enabling it to better withstand and recover from cyber incidents.
- Attracting and Retaining Patients: In an increasingly digital world, patients are more aware of data privacy and security. Facilities with strong security practices may be more attractive to patients seeking trustworthy healthcare providers.
- Collaboration and Information Sharing: Participating in industry-specific information sharing and analysis centres (ISACs) and collaborating with other healthcare organizations can enhance threat intelligence and improve collective defense.
- Legal and Regulatory Expertise: Engaging with legal counsel and cybersecurity experts who specialize in healthcare regulations is crucial for ensuring full compliance and navigating the complexities of the Act.
- Board and Leadership Engagement: Strong leadership support and engagement are essential for driving a culture of cybersecurity awareness and ensuring that data protection is a top priority across the organization.

#### Other Important Considerations

Healthcare facilities should also consider the following key aspects as they prepare for and comply with the Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024:

- Appointment of a Certified Data Protection Officer: Data protection laws can be intricate and constantly evolving. A DPO possesses the specialized knowledge to interpret these regulations and ensure the healthcare facility's practices align with legal requirements.
- Resource Allocation and Budgeting: Implementing the necessary security measures and training requires adequate financial investment and resource allocation.
- Ongoing Monitoring and Adaptation: The cyber threat landscape is constantly evolving. Facilities must establish processes for continuous monitoring of their security posture and adapt their defences to emerging threats.

#### Conclusion

The Cyber and Data Protection Act of 2024 marks a significant step towards creating a more secure and trustworthy digital healthcare environment. While it presents new challenges and requirements for healthcare facilities, the benefits of enhanced security, increased patient trust, and reduced risk of costly data breaches are undeniable. By proactively understanding the Act's implications, investing in robust cybersecurity measures, and fostering a culture of security awareness, healthcare facilities can not only ensure compliance but also strengthen their overall resilience and continue to provide high-quality care in an increasingly interconnected world. It is imperative for healthcare leaders to prioritize cybersecurity and data protection as fundamental pillars of their operations in this new era.





## HEALTH PROFESSIONS AUTHORITY ZIMBABWE

### CLIENT SERVICE CHARTER

#### Who We Are

The H.R.A. is a regulatory body under the Ministry of Health and Childcare in Zimbabwe.

Our services include:

- Registration and inspection of Health Facilities.
- Coordination and oversight of the activities of the 8 Health Professional Councils and their members.
- Handling disputes between Health Professionals and their Councils.

#### Our Vision

To become "A Health Regulatory Authority recognized as the world-class benchmark."

#### Our Mission

We seek to uphold and promote high standards for the healthcare delivery system in Zimbabwe through the coordination and regulation of activities of all health professionals, health professions Councils and healthcare institutions in an ethical, efficient and professional manner.

#### Our Values

In the pursuit of our vision, we strive for excellence in all we do. We also uphold the following values:

- Accessibility	- Professionalism
- Efficiency	- Confidentiality
- Integrity	- Transparency

#### Client Promise

People are at the core of everything we do. This Client Service Charter is our service commitment to you. It explains what we do, what you can expect from us, how we will respond to your requests, and how you can give us feedback.

#### Operating Hours

8am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday.

COMMITMENT	SERVICE
Registration Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After confirmation of their readiness for inspection, an inspection will be carried out within 14 working days.</li></ul>
Renewal /Certificates Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Renewal license will be issued within 3 working days.</li></ul>
Written Physical Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We aim to respond to all written physical correspondence within 3 working days of receipt. If we cannot provide within the specified time, we will provide an interim response and advise when a final response can be expected.</li></ul>
Telephone Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All calls are answered within 3 rings.</li><li>• Phone calls will be attended between 8am-4.30 pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).</li><li>• The staff member who answers your call will provide their name. You will be treated with courtesy and respect and provided with accurate information. If the query cannot be dealt with by the staff member directly, it will be assigned to the appropriate H.P.A member for further intervention.</li></ul>
Email Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emails will be checked daily and responded to within 24 hours. A contact name will be provided in all email responses.</li></ul>
Internal Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will provide the same level of service internally to our colleagues as we do to our external customers.</li></ul>
Courtesy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All senior citizens, pregnant ladies and people with disability will be given first preference when they visit our offices.</li></ul>
Complaints handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All complaints received from HPA clients receive the highest priority.</li></ul>

For feedback on the above, and any other service -related issues, please reach us through the following:

**Physical address:** 7 Ross Avenue, Belgravia, Harare

**Landlines :** 0772 161 770/1

**Cell:** 0782 588 614

**Website:** [www.hpa.co.zw](http://www.hpa.co.zw)

**Facebook** – Health Professions Authority Zimbabwe

**Twitter** – @HPA\_Zim

**Email** : [info@hpa.co.zw/](mailto:info@hpa.co.zw) [pr@hpa.co.zw](mailto:pr@hpa.co.zw)

# PARENTING JOURNEY: A LITTLE TRAINING MAY GO A LONG WAY



By Noreen Kudzanai Wini Dari,  
Community Psychologist

We sat under the shadow of the avocado tree with my sister-in-law, enjoying the cool breeze it provided against the October heat. Suddenly, Ruvimbo came running out of the house holding three dolls; she screamed, "Tete, look at my babies! I now have three of them!" I laughed while I embraced the babies together with their mother. I inquired of their names, and the day's names seemed to have changed from the last time I had visited. We played with the babies; she carried some, threw down some, and carried others upside down until she announced to her babies, "Time to sleep. I want to go play, Nyasha is waiting for me." She took the dolls, laid them side by side and covered them with my shawl before disappearing with her friend.

Ruvimbo is my six-year-old niece, and her interaction with her dolls is a familiar pastime for many girls her age. The pastime forms our very first insights into the world of parenting. We name our children, feed them, bathe them, wash their clothes, tuck them to bed and forget about them while we take a break until the next day. We can take a break from parenting in our imaginary world. As I give thought to all these practices and experiences, I begin to wonder if the fallacy is helpful at all in preparing us for the parenting journey. Are my peers who never got dolls but dealt with real-life siblings better prepared than I am? The journeys of our childhood parenting play simplify parenting; how I wish someone had told me that it's a bittersweet journey; not all days are glorious.

When my first child was born, oh!! there was labour, of course; at least this came with adequate info as far as how painful it was going to be. With all the reassurances that the baby will be the glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. No wonder they are called bundles of joy. I held my baby and felt accomplished. I finally had a real baby to call my own. Breastfeeding, a seemingly easy task I had mimicked as a girl in my imaginary parenting world, was suddenly not so easy; here there was a new term called latching.

Suddenly, I started questioning my competencies as a

mum, and my dream to be a super mum began to fall apart. I held on to my son dearly as I did my best to get breastfeeding correct over the next few days. Maiwe, maiwe!!!! Suddenly, parenting was not as easy as I had believed all my life. After a few attempts over a fortnight or so, I got the latching right, and I was super happy I had just joined the league of certified breast milk-feeding moms.



My son slept peacefully for the first 3 days or so, suddenly he woke up, and I am convinced he had realised that he had a dedicated human being to care for him. He would scream so loud; however, unlike Ruvimbo's babies, who would be given a command by their mum to "go to sleep" and obey, my son seemed like he could not hear me. Otherwise, why wouldn't he listen to me, his mommy?

My experiences above are just but a highlight of the many truths many new moms face with their newborns. Raising children is never a stroll in the park; it calls for patience, endurance, and knowledge. Knowledge of

child development stages in the physical domain, as well as the socio-emotional domain, will help give a great deal of insight to parents. The kind of knowledge that equips you to deal with your child's behaviour with a little less frustration and patience emanating from a deeper understanding that there is a future for the child you are contributing to as a parent.

As parents, we often believe we know everything that concerns raising children, for we were once children, and some, like Ruvimbo, had a chance to be a mother, but the experiences may not suffice at all. Most of what is learned about parenting is learned in one's childhood, as no formal training takes place to prepare would-be parents. Parenting is a period of trial and error. A growing child's psychological development is largely veiled and unknown, with the physical development of children taking centre stage. From the day a mother falls pregnant, the system will offer plenty of tips and advice on the child's physical growth, development, and well-being.

The information given to mothers may not be empowering enough to make parents masters in child rearing, but they will at least be aware of what to expect. This, unfortunately, is not as true for psychological and emotional development. The formative years in child development are truly important for establishing emotional, cognitive, and

social well-being patterns. Each stage of development presents an opportunity for the child to learn a virtue or a vice. Sometimes, our approach as parents, whether intended or unintended, may cause maladjustment as we fail to provide relevant stimulation for optimal development to take place.

Given that there are very few, if any, schools on parenting where one can formally train as we do for all our professional training to acquire both theoretical and practical training, where do parents look for information and role models? Parent training programs involve purposive learning activities for parents attempting to change or improve their method of parenting in the hope of influencing the child's behaviour at home or in other settings, thereby reducing misunderstanding between parent and child. It is important for one to follow an evidence-based parent training programme such as Parenting for Lifelong Health.

Evidence-based parent training programmes give value for money as they have demonstrated over time that they can improve parent-child interactions parental knowledge on child development and cause no harm.

#### Profile

Noreen Kudzanai Wini Dari is a full-time mom and registered community psychologist with a special interest in promoting positive parenting.





By Conrad Njanike  
(HPA Internal Auditor)

# ACCOUNTABILITY IN HEALTHCARE: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Accountability is a critical aspect of healthcare, which involves taking responsibility for one's actions, decisions and behaviours. It is an essential component of delivering safe, high-quality care to patients. In healthcare, accountability is not just about holding individuals accountable for their actions but also about creating a culture of accountability that fosters transparency, honesty and responsibility.

Let's dive deeper into what that looks like.

**Improved Patient Safety:** When healthcare providers are accountable for their actions, patient safety improves. Accountability ensures that healthcare providers are aware of their responsibilities and take the necessary steps to meet those responsibilities, reducing the likelihood of errors or mistakes that can harm patients.

**Enhanced Quality of Care:** Accountability promotes a culture of excellence in healthcare, where healthcare providers are committed to delivering high-quality care to patients. By holding healthcare providers accountable for their actions, decisions, and behaviours, healthcare organizations can ensure that their staff is providing the best possible care to their patients.

**Trust and Transparency:** Accountability helps to build trust and transparency in healthcare. Patients and their families are more likely to trust healthcare providers and organizations that are accountable for their actions. When healthcare providers are open and transparent about their practices and policies, patients and their families can make informed decisions about their care.

"Patients and their families are more likely to trust healthcare providers and organizations that are accountable for their actions."

**Legal Compliance:** Healthcare organizations have a legal obligation to meet specific standards of care. Accountability ensures that healthcare providers are aware of these standards and take the necessary steps to meet them. By holding healthcare providers accountable for their actions, healthcare organizations can avoid legal issues and protect themselves from liability.

**Improved Staff Morale:** A culture of accountability in healthcare can improve staff morale. When healthcare providers are held accountable for their actions, they are more likely to take pride in their work and feel a sense of responsibility for the care they provide. This, in turn, can lead to improved job satisfaction and retention rates.

## Accountability at Health Professions Authority

Health Professions authority ensures that every cent is accounted for and used efficiently in delivering the mandate as stipulated in the Health Professions Act Chapter 27:19.

To demonstrate our accountability and transparency, the Authority invites the Office of the Auditor General to audit its financial books every year. The audited financials are then presented during Annual General meetings usually held in the month of November.

In conclusion, accountability is a critical aspect of healthcare that plays a vital role in ensuring patient safety, enhancing the quality of care, building trust and transparency, meeting legal obligations, and improving staff morale. Healthcare organizations must foster a culture of accountability that encourages healthcare providers to take responsibility for their actions, decisions and behaviours, and consequently promote transparency, honesty and responsibility.



## NASSA GOES DIGITAL TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The National Social Security Authority (NSSA) has placed digital at the centre of its drive to improve customer experience, in line with our vision to become a world-class provider of social security by 2030.

The motive of this strategy is to enable its clients to be served remotely, from wherever they are, thereby drastically cutting down on unnecessary traffic to NSSA offices that are situated across the country. Serving customers remotely has both financial and safety benefits in that customers will save money from unnecessary travel as well as eliminate the risk associated with it. This is particularly beneficial to our pensioners who are saved from the hassles associated with public transport, as most of them do not have their vehicles. Towards this, NSSA has developed several products.

In 2020 we launched the NSSA Self-Service Portal (SSP), which enables contributors to do business with us remotely. It was in stark contrast to the archaic manual system that prevailed before this breakthrough. Our self-service portal allows convenience and ease of doing business for employers to register their organisations in the comfort of their own spaces. They can also upload their monthly returns via the SSP, as well as download NSSA clearance certificates.

Employees are similarly able to track their employment history and update their details, including adding beneficiaries, as and when necessary. We particularly encourage employees to regularly check their contribution status to avoid unnecessary delays in the processing of their benefits when the time arrives.

Manual systems the world over, are notorious for backlogs and inefficiency. For NSSA, they led to an accumulation of backlogs in terms of capturing employer and employee data thus negatively impacting data cleanliness levels and customer experience.

The introduction of the Self-Service Portal has also enabled us to leverage partnerships with other organisations in administering our schemes as recommended by Guideline 4 of the ISSA Guidelines on Administrative Solutions for Coverage Extension. Building on the digital journey, the NSSA self-service

portal is being integrated into a one stop-virtual-shop, the NSSA Contact Centre, which is currently undergoing pilot testing before being introduced to the market.

The contact centre is expected to further improve service delivery as customers will have diverse options for dealing with NSSA from wherever they are. It is an integrated platform that brings together voice and digital channels. The benefits of going digital for NSSA are significant. The process is assisting NSSA to better adapt to the changing needs of its customers.

As digital technology evolves, we can expect to see an even more disruptive NSSA that adapts its processes to improve the delivery of social security benefits in line with NSSA's lifelong promise to clients.

For more information about NSSA visit [www.nssa.org.zw](http://www.nssa.org.zw) or @nssazw on Facebook and X. For feedback, email [info@nssa.org.zw](mailto:info@nssa.org.zw).



**By Tendai C. Mutseyekwa**  
**Deputy Director, Marketing and Communications**

### About the author

Tendai Caxton Mutseyekwa is a marketing and communications specialist with over 20 years of experience during which he has worked in various industries, including financial services, advertising agency, media, tourism, as well as distribution and logistics. As Deputy Director, Marketing and Communications, Tendai spearheaded the rebranding journey for NSSA. He is an avid road runner and enjoys watching sports, reading, and spending quality time with family and friends during his spare time. Tendai holds various academic qualifications, including the following: an MSc International Business Management, an Executive Masters in Business Management, a BA in Media Studies, and a National Diploma in Mass Communication. He is a Wolfson College (Cambridge University) Fellow and a Commonwealth Press Union Fellow.



## **HEALTH PROFESSIONS AUTHORITY ZIMBABWE**

The Health Professions Authority is the country's health regulatory body that seeks to uphold and promote high quality healthcare in Zimbabwe by conducting inspections to monitor practice and standards and ensure that all health institutions are registered with the Authority in terms of Sections 97 to 106 of the Health Professions Act. The Authority also inspects to ensure that health practitioners (whether public or private) are registered with their respective Councils.

All employers of health practitioners (whether public or private) are required to ensure that they are employing practitioners who are duly registered with their respective Councils and are holders of valid Practising Certificates (Sections 91 to 96 of the Health Professions Act).

Please note that H.P.A Certificates expire on  
31 December 2025.

You can contact our office for 2026 renewals.

Telephone: 0772 161 770/1 / [info@hpa.co.zw](mailto:info@hpa.co.zw)

Inspectorate: 0783 137 242/[inspectorate@hpa.co.zw](mailto:inspectorate@hpa.co.zw)

Public Relations: 0782 588 614 / [pr@hpa.co.zw](mailto:pr@hpa.co.zw)



By Tafadzwa Zambara  
(HPA Finance Manager)

# ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING

The evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in finance has been a transformative journey, marked by the integration of advanced algorithms and computational techniques to enhance decision-making processes and operational efficiency. This evolution has been driven by the convergence of several technological advancements, including machine learning, deep learning, and blockchain technologies, which have collectively reshaped the landscape of financial services.

The evolution of AI in finance has been the development and implementation of neurogenetic tools. These tools combine the principles of genetic algorithms with neural networks to optimize financial decision-making processes, enabling more accurate predictions and efficient resource allocation. The application of these advanced computational techniques has facilitated the emergence of decentralized finance (DeFi) platforms, which leverage blockchain technology to offer more transparent and secure financial transactions.

However, the integration of AI technologies has not only enhanced the operational capabilities of financial institutions but also introduced new challenges and ethical considerations. The increasing reliance on algorithmic decision-making has raised concerns regarding data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the potential for systemic risks. As such, the evolution of AI in finance has been accompanied by a growing emphasis on the development of ethical AI frameworks and regulatory standards to ensure that these technologies are deployed in a manner that is both effective and responsible.

In addition to the technological and ethical aspects, the evolution of AI in finance has also been influenced by the changing expectations of consumers and the competitive dynamics of the financial services industry. The demand for personalized financial services, coupled with the need for enhanced security and efficiency, has driven financial institutions to adopt AI technologies at an accelerating pace. This trend is reflected in the

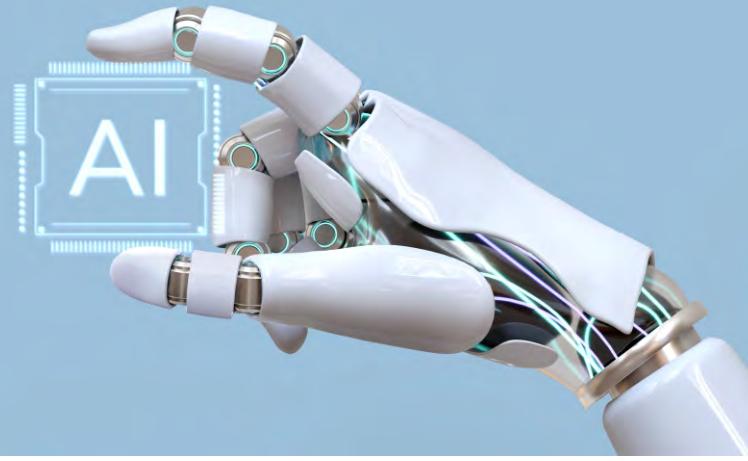
increasing investment in AI research and development, as well as the proliferation of fintech startups that are leveraging AI to disrupt traditional banking models.

## Enhancements in Decision Accuracy and Efficiency

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into financial decision-making represents a significant leap towards enhancing both the accuracy and efficiency of financial operations and services. As evidenced by the evolving landscape of AI applications in finance, the potential for AI to transform traditional processes is vast, promising unprecedented levels of operational efficiency and decision accuracy. This transformation is largely attributed to AI's ability to process and analyse vast amounts of data far beyond human capabilities, enabling the identification of patterns, trends, and insights that would otherwise remain undiscovered.

It is important to note that the integration of AI in finance is not without its ethical challenges. The reliance on AI for critical financial decisions necessitates a rigorous examination of the ethical considerations surrounding AI's application. The development of ethical AI frameworks is crucial to ensure that AI technologies are deployed responsibly, with adequate consideration for data privacy, bias mitigation and transparency. These ethical frameworks aim to balance the technological advancements brought about by AI with the imperative to uphold ethical standards in financial decision-making. Below are other benefits associated with AI technology.

- Optimized resource allocation:** AI can help allocate resources more efficiently, reducing healthcare costs and improving patient outcomes.
- Personalized medicine:** AI can help personalize treatment plans and drug recommendations based on individual patient characteristics.
- Predictive analytics:** AI can predict patient outcomes, allowing for proactive interventions and improved care.
- Streamlined billing and insurance claims:** AI can automate administrative tasks, reducing errors and freeing up resources for patient care.



## Risks and Unintended Consequences

The deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in financial decision-making heralds a new era of efficiency and precision, yet it concurrently introduces a spectrum of risks and unintended consequences that necessitate careful consideration.

- 1. Bias in diagnosis or treatment:** AI models may perpetuate existing biases, leading to unfair or inaccurate diagnoses or treatments.
- 2. Dependence on data quality:** AI is only as good as the data it's trained on. Poor data quality can lead to inaccurate or unfair decisions.
- 3. Privacy concerns:** AI models may require access to sensitive patient data, which must be protected from unauthorized access or misuse.

**4. Job displacement:** AI may automate jobs currently done by healthcare professionals, potentially leading to job losses.

**5. Regulatory compliance:** AI complexity and evolution can make it challenging for financial institutions to comply with existing regulations

**6. Lack of transparency:** AI decision-making processes can be difficult to understand, making it challenging to identify biases and errors

**7. Security:** AI systems can be vulnerable to cyberattacks and data breaches, compromising customer information

**8. Explainability:** AI systems can be complex, making it challenging to explain their decision-making processes and actions to consumers



# HPA AND COUNCILS EXHIBIT AT ZITF, HARARE AGRICULTURAL SHOW AND MANICALAND AGRICULTURAL SHOW

Health Professions Authority (HPA) alongside the Health Professions Councils successfully showcased their regulatory mandate and engaged with many citizens through exhibiting at provincial, national and international exhibitions. This year's exhibitions were marked by a powerful collaboration, as HPA was joined by the Health Professions Councils. These joint exhibitions served as a centralized hub for health profession education, emphasizing the critical importance of seeking care from legally registered professionals and accredited facilities. The primary objective of the collaborative effort was to reinforce public trust in the country's healthcare system. By uniting under one banner, the health regulatory bodies provided clear, unified information on professional standards and oversight. Members of the public also got awareness on their patients rights as stipulated in the Patients Charter.







# EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

By Jenia Chinowaita  
(HPA Administration Manager)

Employee motivation refers to the degree of dedication, zeal, and creativity that a company's employees possess while at work. Since not all tasks will be stimulating, companies often struggle to maintain and enhance employee motivation. Consequently, they need to find strategies to keep their staff members engaged while also monitoring and fostering motivation.

Why is employee motivation important in the workplace?

Suppose a worker is not very motivated at work, they are more likely to avoid chores, work more slowly, and use their phones more frequently. But most of all, they will be unfocused and likely to put less energy into their work. In addition to being a waste of resources, this might also negatively impact other staff members, which could prevent the business from achieving key goals or generating work of the best calibre. A motivated worker, on the other hand, is enthused, focused, and proud of their job. They finish jobs fast, take action and desire to do a good job, both for themselves and for the company.

## How to improve employee motivation in the workplace

### 1. Recognise and reward great work

Employees must understand that their supervisors value the effort they put in. Rewarding deserving individuals boosts their confidence, excitement, and team spirit in addition to their self-esteem.

Using a recognition platform to honour top performers who uphold the company's principles is a useful strategy. Offering team-building activities, wellness programs, and secondment opportunities to employees is crucial throughout the year.

Reward does not necessarily have to be monetary, it could be a gesture, such as displaying their picture on the notice board. Rewards are particularly good promoters of motivation and job satisfaction. To encourage employees to go the extra mile, make their effort worth it with a gift or thoughtful act such as long service and employee of the quarter awards.

### 2. Create a welcoming workplace environment

No one wants to sit in a gloomy office and desperately wait for home time every day. If workplaces create a friendly culture, with areas for rest and play, employees

will look forward to coming into work. The saying 'work hard, play hard' is important here. As motivation and mood go hand in hand, a poor mood can affect the ability to concentrate and will lower the feeling of energy in the workplace.

### 3. Offer impressive benefits

Make everyone feel that they are working in the best place they can be. Offering employee benefits and perks, fringe benefits that aim to make your employees' lives better both in and outside of work, helps to boost the mood and sense of loyalty to the company.

### 4. Support staff motivation by supporting employee wellbeing

When organizations are implementing motivation strategies or employee incentive schemes, they often overlook wellbeing. There is no dispute that using rewards as an incentive is a great motivator. However, if an employee is feeling tired or overwhelmed, they won't produce their best work, no matter how hard they try. Taking a well-rounded approach to wellbeing, addressing your employees' mental, emotional, and physical health is a great way of keeping them healthy, happy, and at the top of their game.

### 5. Lead with vision

Everyone wants to know that their efforts are driving towards something. What's the next step? What does success look like for the company? A destination helps to motivate the journey, so make sure the vision for the company is clear.

### 6. Make sure everyone understands the 'why'

Employees will know what needs to be done, but there is need to explain further; need to communicate the 'why' of each task. The why is the company's overall mission. If everyone knows how their individual actions can personally add to the overall goal of the company, it brings much-needed intrinsic motivation to even the most simple task.

What are the benefits of staff motivation?

- Higher productivity levels
- More innovation
- Lower levels of absenteeism

# HPA INSPECTORS



Mr Kevin Madziwa



Mr Tinashe Mupoperi



Mr David Kapesi



Mr Junius Dhemba



Ms Dorcas Saurosi



Ms Kudakwashe Tsodzo



Ms Sarah Tandi



Ms Kintsi Sebata



Ms Fungai Makotore



## HEALTH PROFESSIONS AUTHORITY ZIMBABWE

### **BANKING DETAILS:**

#### **RTGS ACCOUNTS**

Bank: First Capital Bank  
Account Name: Health Professions Authority  
Branch: FCDA  
Account Number: 21576306148  
Branch Code: 2157

Bank: Nedbank  
Account Name: Health Professions Authority  
Branch: Borrowdale  
Account Number: 11991749634  
Branch Code: 18101

### **BANKING DETAILS:**

#### **NOSTRO FCA DOMESTIC ACCOUNT (USD)**

Bank: First Capital Bank  
Account Name: Health Professions Authority  
Branch: FCDA  
Account Number: 21571041804  
Branch Code: 2157

Bank: Nedbank  
Account Name: Health Professions Authority  
Branch: Borrowdale  
Account Number: 11991767438  
Branch Code: 18101

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