Status Report

ACTis | Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System

ACTis provides risk analysis and early intervention recommendations against state capture and corruption in South African government institutions

PUBLIC ENTITY

ACT | ACCOUNTABILITY TRACKER

ISS | INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES

Health Professions Council of South Africa

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About the Institution

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is a regulatory body established to control the education, training and registration of practising health professionals registered under the Health Professions Act. The HPCSA reports to the Minister of Health. A Council governs the HPCSA and serves as its accounting authority.[1] In 2024/25, its total expenditure was R405.9m.[2]

Flag Status

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
								
Improper appointments	Co-opting key functions	Climate of fear or favour	Corrupt awards	Financial malpractice	Obstructing accountability	Manipulating perceptions	Private gain	Shadow network

ISS Analysis

- ACTis has placed five flags under monitoring for the HPCSA.
- Allegations of misconduct, disciplinary disputes and concerns about some officials' fitness for office have persisted over several years, while the implementation of consequence management and corrective measures appears uneven and contested.
- A lack of institutional responsiveness to external recommendations and oversight processes is a key concern for the HPCSA. Failures to implement corrective interventions can enable governance problems to persist, even where misconduct has been identified and investigated.
- A new Council and President assumed office in December 2025 following a period of instability, and steps have been taken to pursue consequence management and recover irregular expenditure linked to past governance failures. This could signal a new era of strengthened governance and the implementation of outstanding reforms.
- Poor governance and a lack of reform at the HPCSA, evident in unfair financial penalties, have created a stressful environment for legitimate doctors. Administrative delays in professional conduct inquiries have eroded public confidence in the Council's ability to regulate the profession and protect patients.[3]

 Flag raised

 Flag lowered

 Under monitoring

Findings

Flag #1
Improper Appointments



The flag is being monitored because of concerns about certain senior appointments.

- Following a decade of significant governance instability, a new Council was appointed in December 2025 for the 2025 to 2030 period. Wezile Chitha was appointed President of the Council for the same period.[4]
    - Former HPCSA President Simon Nemutandani served from December 2020 until June 2024. The Medical and Dental Professions Board, of which he was a member, recalled him in June 2024 amid accusations that he misused the entity's funds for non-work-related expenses. This amounted to R122 000 between January 2022 and March 2023.[5] In December 2024, it was reported that Nemutandani remained registered as a dentist with the HPCSA.[6] In February 2026, the HPCSA sent Nemutandani a letter of demand to repay over R6.1m in irregular payments for expenses related to business claims between April 2017 and March 2024.[7]
- The HPCSA's previous Registrar, Magome Masike, served from May 2023 until his contract ended on 28 February 2026, despite being found guilty of misconduct in December 2024. Masike received two fines totalling R18 000 for communication failures and making disparaging remarks about his colleagues.[8] The charges stemmed from a complaint by the South African Medical Association Trade Union, which accused Masike of lacking professional courtesy and failing to fulfil his secretariat duties. The Democratic Alliance also called for Masike's suspension as part of a broader push to address the HPCSA's continued enforcement of regulations the Competition Commission previously declared unlawful (see Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability).[9] In a June 2026 report to the Portfolio Committee on Health, the HPCSA reported that Masike continued to perform key functions and sign documents between 1 March and 16 March 2026, after his contract had expired and before Karmin Chetty was appointed as Interim Registrar on 16 March 2026.[10]
- The Portfolio Committee on Health raised concerns about the qualifications of the acting Head of Legal and Regulatory Affairs during a March 2026 meeting.[11]

Flag #2

Co-opting Key Functions



The flag is being monitored because the institution has resisted unbundling as a corrective measure.

- The HPCSA has not been unbundled, despite a recommendation by the 2015 Ministerial Task Team (MTT) appointed to investigate allegations of mismanagement and poor governance at the entity.[12] The MTT recommended unbundling the HPCSA into at least two entities: the Medical and Dental Council, which at the time constituted about a third of the HPCSA membership; and a Health and Rehabilitation Council. This would decentralise operational, financial and governance structures, and mean that the HPCSA would no longer act as the sole custodian of these responsibilities.[13] In September 2025, Minister of Health Aaron Motsoaledi noted that the HPCSA submitted a report indicating that it did not support the recommendation to unbundle following its own internal consultations.[14] In March 2026, Minister Motsoaledi reiterated his support for unbundling the entity and said steps were being taken to implement the process.[15]

Flag #3

Climate of Fear or Favour



The flag is being monitored to determine whether a wider pattern of protecting selected officials exists.

- The HPCSA did not institute disciplinary proceedings against senior officials found unfit for office due to poor governance and maladministration, as per the MTT's recommendations.[16]

Flag #6

Obstructing Accountability



The flag is being monitored to assess whether signs of lack of accountability are part of a broader pattern.

- In 2023, the South African Medical Association (SAMA) accused the HPCSA of failing to implement key requirements and recommendations from government authorities.
  - In 2011, the Competition Commission ruled against the HPCSA's application for an exemption from regulations that aimed to restrict competition by limiting how health care professionals could practice and advertise. The Commission ruled that an exemption would have violated the Competition Act.[17] Although the ruling was issued over a decade ago, SAMA reported that the HPCSA continued to enforce its contested regulations by fining doctors up to R60 000 for breaching regulations declared



unlawful. The HPCSA has maintained that its regulations are lawful because the Minister of Health promulgated them under the Health Professions Act.[18]

- In 2019, the Competition Commission's Health Market Inquiry (HMI) flagged several rules related to fee-sharing, the employment of doctors and multi-disciplinary group practices as highly restrictive and outdated, and emphasised that they should be reformed. An April 2026 report by the HPCSA noted that it had adjusted all but one of the rules the HMI declared outdated and inflexible. The HPCSA rescinded one rule after receiving submissions from practitioners and professional associations, stating it did so to allow for further engagement with stakeholders.[19]
- The HPCSA did not unbundle according to the MTT's 2015 recommendations (see Flag #2: Co-opting Key Functions). The HPCSA also did not institute disciplinary proceedings against senior officials found unfit for office, as the MTT recommended.[20] The HPCSA denied this and claimed that it had made progress.[21]

- In March 2026, the Portfolio Committee on Health accused the HPCSA of presenting misleading and inaccurate information to Parliament.[22] This related specifically to the HPCSA's statement about the date of a professional conduct inquiry for a particular practitioner. The practitioner stated she was unavailable for the inquiry date. However, the HPCSA unilaterally confirmed the date and claimed it had been scheduled and agreed upon by both the HPCSA and the practitioner. The HPCSA later formally apologised and admitted the statement was an error.[23]

Flag #8
Private Gain



The flag is being monitored to determine whether individuals linked to the entity may have unduly benefited from their positions or access.

- A forensic investigation completed in February 2022 found that Nemutandani received R910 000 for attending board and subcommittee meetings between 2020 and 2021. This was despite directives from the Minister of Health and the National Treasury that he could not receive board fees because the Gauteng Department of Health employed him at the time.[24]



Recommended Actions

	DUTY BEARER	ACTION(S)	ASSOCIATED FLAGS
1.	Health Professions Council of South Africa	• Seek a clear directive from the National Department of Health on unbundling the HPCSA. • Finalise all disciplinary processes related to former officials and officials implicated in governance failures, misconduct and irregular expenditure. • Seek a resolution on the legal contradictions affecting regulations on competition between health care professionals.	Flag #1: Improper Appointments Flag #2: Co-opting Key Functions Flag#3: Climate of Fear or Favour Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability Flag #8: Private Gain
2.	National Department of Health	• Assist the HPCSA to resolve the legal contradictions between the Competition Commission and the Health Professions Act, as they impact on competition between health care professionals. • Provide a clear directive to HPCSA on unbundling the institution.	Flag #2: Co-opting Key Functions Flag #6: Obstructing Accountability

Flag raised Flag lowered Under monitoring

The 9 Flags

Flag #1
Improper Appointments

Improper appointments, dismissals or failure to remove individuals in senior positions may be used to drive a corrupt agenda.

Flag #2
Co-opting Key Functions

Informal control may be established over critical functions within the institution to abuse them.

Flag #3
Climate of Fear or Favour

The working culture favours loyalty over duty; alignment with a corrupt agenda is rewarded, and resistance is punished.

Flag #4
Corrupt Awards

Contracts, licences, partnerships, loans and/or investments may be awarded irregularly and repeatedly benefit the same actors.

Flag #5
Financial Malpractice

The institution's financial management practices may be abused to advance a corrupt agenda.

Flag #6
Obstructing Accountability

The institution's internal operations might be deliberately obscured to hide potential misconduct.

Flag #7
Manipulating Perceptions

A public narrative that frames misconduct as innocence may be promoted.

Flag #8
Private Gain

Illicit gains may be distributed to benefit the same actors.

Flag #9
Shadow Network

The same public and private actors may collude to gain control over an institution's assets and functions, benefiting repeatedly.

About ACTis

What is ACTis?

The Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System is an initiative of the Anti-Corruption and Accountability Project at the Institute for Security Studies. It provides analysis on corruption and state capture in South Africa, to inform early intervention and enforcement. It utilises a system of indicators and an AI-driven data-collection and analysis tool, validated by human experts. It identifies risks within individual government institutions and produces actionable recommendations to address them, with a view to disrupting patterns of state capture and corruption. Findings are shared directly with government and other duty-bearers, civil society organisations, the media and the public, empowering authorities to intervene, strengthening accountability, and enabling citizens activism.

Links to ACTis Information:

Further project information may be found at the following links:

Terms and Definitions

Project Methodology and Analytical Framework

About the Anti-Corruption and Accountability project

About the Institute for Security Studies

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Flag raised | Flag lowered | Under monitoring

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