



**Skills development needs of Small
Medium and Micro Enterprises in the Health and Welfare sector**

Abstract

Purpose

To investigate the skills needs and gaps in the SMME sector focusing on businesses operating in the Health and Welfare Economic sector in South Africa.

Methodology

A snap-shot survey was conducted using both a qualitative and quantitative mixed approach. A questionnaire that consisted of both close-ended and open-ended questions was administered online. There were 47 organisations that were randomly selected from the South African Revenue Services (SARS) database of organisations registered in the Health and Welfare sector. These were organisations that were operating in the Health and Welfare sector. Further information was sought by analysing the database on Workplace Skills Plan (WSP's) that were submitted to the HWSETA in the 2012/13 financial year.

Findings

Approximately 57% of SMMEs are located in the urban area. While the majority (52%) are operating in the health sector followed by those operating in both health and welfare sectors.

Skills development interventions that are required by the SMME sector are as follows:

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS	FIELD/OCCUPATION
Graduate development Programmes (e.g. Experiential Training, In-service Training, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECD ▪ Social Work ▪ Nursing ▪ Pharmacy
Professional development Programmes (e.g. Continuous Development Programmes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post basic Nursing ▪ Supervision and Management (Children's Home, Old Age Centres and Youth Development Centres) ▪ Service Enhancement Training (Radiography) ▪ ILS and BAA updates for CPD points
Learnership Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Health Work ▪ ECD ▪ Social Auxiliary Work ▪ Radiography and Ultrasonography ▪ Child and Youth Care Work ▪ Phlebotomy, Medical Technicians and Lab Assistants ▪ Pharmacist, Pharmacy Technicians, Pharmacy Assistants and Basic Pharmacists ▪ Nursing (Enrolled and Bridging) ▪ Occupational Therapy Technicians ▪ Physiotherapy Technicians ▪ Care Worker
Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacist Assistant
Internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Technologists and Bio-Medical Scientists ▪ Social Work, Counselling and Community Work ▪ Nursing ▪ Social Auxiliary Work ▪ Pharmacists and Pharmacist Assistants

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enrolled Nurse and Auxiliary Nurse Practicals ▪ Child and Youth Care Work
RPL(Recognition of Prior Learning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child and youth Care, ECD and Care Worker ▪ Experienced Clinical Specialisation in Nursing ▪ Pharmacy Technicians ▪ Occupational Therapy Technicians ▪ Operating Department Assistants ▪ Social Work ▪ Community Development and Lay Counselling
Bursaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical technologist and Bio-medical Scientist ▪ Nursing (Enrolled and Bridging) ▪ Social Work ▪ Child and Youth Care ▪ Physiotherapy (Technicians) ▪ Occupational Therapy ▪ Operating Department Assistant ▪ Carers
Specialised Certificate Courses (e.g. A certificate received after being trained on a new machine/process)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theatre Technicians ▪ Nursing Certificate Programme (High care, Mental Health and Maternity) ▪ Data capturing, Defensive Driving (couriers) Nursing and Administration
ABET Level 1 Up to Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic literacy and numeracy
ABET Level 4 Up to Grade 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assist ABET level 4 learners to further their studies through

FET Colleges	
Flagship Programmes (Any programmes that will lead to employment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alzheimer course ▪ Palliative Care
Other (specify)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ pharmacy clinic nurse ▪ Case management, credit control and any other degrees related to our industry ▪ Admin, Fundraising ▪ Leadership Development for all Health Managers ▪ General Maintenance workers skills training, basic plumbing, general welder ▪ Debt collection training. management training, customer service training ▪ Special Funding of Abet for our Learners ▪ Programme planning and management ▪ Unemployment programmes ▪ Pay toward industry organized learning programmes ▪ Office assistance ▪ Computer training ▪ Financial Managers

Recommendations

The information from the review describes various skills development needs and gaps with specific sub-sectors where the need resides. The health and welfare sub-sectors have almost similar needs in terms of skills development interventions ranging from Graduate Development Programmes (i.e. experiential training and in-service training) to Flagship Programmes that lead to employment. It must be noted that the HWSETA has been implementing most of the skills development programmes mentioned in this review (eg. Learnerships, bursaries, ABET, skills programmes, etc.). However, it is recommended that the HWSETA focuses more on programmes such as Professional Development Programmes, Flagship Programmes, Recognition of Prior Learning and specialized Certificate Courses.

Practical Implications

More effective and specific skills development interventions may be designed to meet the skills needs of small business operating within the health and welfare sector.

Originality/ Value

The SMME sector has had little participation in the submission of Workplace Skills Plans in the past, consequently the skills needs of the SMME sector was unknown. Therefore, this study has enabled the SETA to understand the needs of the SMME sector and this has added value to the HWSETA.