

AMCOA

ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL COUNCILS OF AFRICA



RESPONSIVE REGULATION
FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES
TOWARDS UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

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DEDICATED TO PROTECTING THE PUBLIC AND ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN AFRICA

Building Regulatory Excellence Through Mentorship

A Successful Mentorship Programme for Regulatory Professionals



Dr MOHALENYANE



What is Mentorship?

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- **Mentorship** is a structured developmental relationship in which an experienced professional (mentor) supports the growth and development of a less experienced professional (mentee).
- **Purpose:**
 - Knowledge transfer
 - Professional development
 - Leadership development
 - Career guidance
 - Building confidence

Background

Effective regulation depends on having professionals with:

- Strong technical and analytical skills
- Knowledge of regulatory frameworks and legislation
- Sound professional judgement
- Ethical decision-making
- Leadership and stakeholder-management skills
- An understanding of the institution's history and practices

Background

- **Challenge:**

Much of this knowledge is acquired through experience and is not easily transferred through formal training alone.

- **Solution:**

A structured mentorship programme can accelerate professional development and institutional knowledge transfer. It helps capture the knowledge before it walks out the door(retire) or retrieve that knowledge even from retirement — it also helps bring international expertise into picture via Virtual, asynchronous coaching.

Programme Goal

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Overall Goal

- To develop a strong pipeline of competent, ethical and future-ready regulatory professionals through structured knowledge transfer and professional development.

Key objectives

- Build technical regulatory competence
- Transfer institutional knowledge
- Develop leadership capabilities
- Strengthen professional confidence
- Promote ethical and evidence-based regulation
- Improve collaboration between experienced and emerging professionals
- Support succession planning

The Mentorship Model

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The programme combines:

- One-to-one mentoring
- Technical coaching
- Case-study discussions
- Job shadowing
- Joint projects
- Leadership development
- Networking
- Regular feedback and assessment

What Makes a Mentorship Programme Successful?

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1. Strong leadership commitment

- Senior management formally supports and participates in the programme.

2. Careful mentor–mentee matching

- Matching considers technical interests, experience, personality and career objectives.

3. Clear expectations

- Both parties agree on objectives, meeting frequency and responsibilities.

4. Practical learning

- Mentees work through real regulatory problems rather than relying only on classroom learning.

5. Regular monitoring

- Progress is reviewed throughout the programme.

6. Recognition

- Mentors and successful mentees receive appropriate institutional recognition.



Mentorship Activities

Examples of activities include:

- Reviewing regulatory decisions and cases
- Discussing compliance and enforcement challenges
- Analysing regulatory legislation and policies
- Developing regulatory-impact assessments
- Participating in inspections or stakeholder consultations
- Reviewing technical reports
- Practising negotiation and communication
- Discussing regulatory ethics and independence
- Exploring regional and international regulatory practices
- Developing a regulatory improvement project

Recommendations

- Integrate mentorship into workforce development.
- Allocate dedicated resources.
- Train mentors regularly.
- Foster a culture of continuous learning through Recognition & CPD accreditation — formal recognition of mentoring hours toward continuing professional development.
- Review and improve the program annually.

Takehome Message

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Mentorship is an investment in institutional sustainability.

- For AMCOA, a well-designed mentorship programme can turn individual experience into **institutional knowledge**, develop the next generation of regulatory leaders, and strengthen the overall quality of regulation.

Key message:

Develop the regulator, strengthen the institution, improve the regulatory outcome.

Case study: *LMDPC Mentorship Visit to the HPCSA,*

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In February 2024, the Lesotho Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Council (LMDPC) undertook a mentorship and benchmarking engagement with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). The purpose of the engagement was to learn from the experience and systems of a more established health-professions regulatory authority and to identify practices that could strengthen LMDPC's governance, regulatory effectiveness, compliance systems and financial sustainability. The engagement focused on four priority areas:

- Leadership and governance;
- Regulatory legislation and policies;
- Compliance and enforcement challenges; and
- Financial management and investment for the Council.



Area One: Leadership and Governance

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The mentorship highlighted the importance of:

- ☐ Strong and ethical leadership;
- ☐ Clear roles and responsibilities for Council, boards and Secretariat;
- ☐ Effective delegation of responsibilities to committees;
- ☐ Strategic planning linked to measurable performance indicators;
- ☐ Regular monitoring of Council decisions;
- ☐ Accountability and transparency;
- ☐ Effective stakeholder engagement; and
- ☐ Continuous professional development of Council members and senior staff.

Area Two: Regulatory Legislation and Policies

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The mentorship highlighted the need for LMDPC to ensure that:

- ☐ Its legislation is clear and responsive to the changing health-professions environment;
- ☐ Regulations are supported by practical policies and procedures;
- ☐ Standards of professional practice are clearly communicated;
- ☐ Registration and licensing requirements are transparent;
- ☐ Complaints and disciplinary procedures are clearly documented;
- ☐ Regulatory decisions are consistent and defensible;
- ☐ Policies are periodically reviewed and updated; and
- ☐ Regulatory requirements are communicated effectively to practitioners and stakeholders.



Area Three: Compliance and Enforcement Challenges

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The Mentorship highlighted the following common Regulatory challenges:

- Practitioners operating without valid registration or licences;
- Delayed renewal of practising licences;
- Non-compliance with professional standards;
- Inadequate reporting of unprofessional conduct;
- Delays in investigation and disciplinary processes;
- Limited regulatory inspection capacity;
- Difficulty obtaining evidence during investigations;
- Limited human and financial resources;
- Resistance to enforcement decisions; and
- Weak coordination between the regulator and other relevant authorities.



Area Four: Financial Management and Investment for the Council

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- ☐ Annual budgeting;
- ☐ Financial forecasting;
- ☐ Revenue management;
- ☐ Expenditure control;
- ☐ Internal controls;
- ☐ Procurement and financial accountability;
- ☐ Asset management;
- ☐ Audit and financial reporting;
- ☐ Cash-flow management;
- ☐ Investment policies; and
- ☐ Long-term financial sustainability.

