

Editorial

Changing the Mind-Set of Quality



Quality is a question of trust, the trust of the client in the service or product. "Reputations are built on trust. Trust is a hard-earned commodity, yet one which can be squandered in a moment. Therefore, in 2018, the South African Quality Institute (SAQI) is celebrating the role that everyone in an organisation plays in building and sustaining trust for all stakeholders: customers, suppliers, staff, regulators, shareholders and society." (SAQI)

World Quality Day is celebrated annually on the second Thursday of November, and 8 November 2018 is an opportunity to celebrate the nursing profession and the achievements of the past year. This is also our opportunity to recognise those that uphold trust to sustain and improve performance every day of the year. The 16th South African Nursing Council's term of office is 23 August 2018 to 22 August 2023 and they took over from a very successful 15th Council and we are looking forward to a term where *Changing the Mind-set of Quality in Nursing* will be their focus.

Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, SA Minister of Health, at the Competition Law Conference, September 2012, said 'I think it will help us to start sifting fact from fiction. Fact number one: We are a country, which is spending more money on health but having poorer outcomes – that is a fact.'

This quote highlights the importance of the nursing profession to drastically change our mind-set of quality and to focus on our responsibility and unique role in ensuring that trust is earned and maintained.

Quality in nursing and health care can be addressed through:

- Keeping the patients safe and limiting risks
- Constantly delivering on promises to patients, clients and stakeholders
- Leading continuous quality improvement initiatives
- Identifying and integrating new evidence-based practices into our healthcare services
- Monitoring and analysing existing and new processes and outcomes
- Ensuring that regulatory requirements are achieved and that all healthcare services comply with the requirements of the National Core Standards for Health Establishments

Nurse leaders have to assist healthcare organisations to put in place competent systems to ensure that goals are met and that they deliver on their promises to patients, clients and stakeholders. The systems of governance, assurance and improvement combined with a culture of quality are the cornerstones to build, sustain and enhance the reputation and the trust in the nursing profession. The work performed by custodians of quality in healthcare organisations serve important roles and their work is critical for improving outcomes, increasing efficiencies and reducing costs. It is therefore important to have trained professionals focussing on systems, processes and methods of measuring, analysing and improving the systems to maximise outcomes while maintaining a culture that establishes safe, quality care. Hardly a day goes by without hearing about quality failures and its impact on the patients, the staff and the stakeholders. These failures occur amidst healthcare facilities being involved in some form of accreditation. Are the accreditation systems not addressing the challenges or is the understanding and maintenance of the quality systems the real issue? In choosing to be part of a quality initiative, organisations attempt to establish an assurance framework to help them understand their operational risks, to mitigate these risks and to put improvement systems in place. We, as nurse leaders, must take time to lead the way for our staff and colleagues to understand quality and to change the mind-set of quality in the healthcare industry.

Let World Quality Day 2018 be the first step in revisiting our current systems to build trust in the nursing profession in South Africa.