

Scarce nursing skills prompts SA to recruit from India

The Life Health Group has recruited 58 specialist nurses from India to serve two-year contracts at its facilities across the country.



Life Health Group's Dr Sharon Vasuthevan says that SA is not training enough specialist nurses to fill urgently needed vacancies in hospitals. Image: LinkedIn

The nurses are specialists in intensive care, neo-natal, renal and theatre work. The Port Elizabeth region has received three nurses, while the Border-Kei region received 19.

The nurses, who qualified at Indian universities, have been seconded to Life hospitals in the province. Twelve are in East London, three in Queenstown and four in Mthatha.

Pretoria has 13 Indian nurses while Johannesburg has 15, Western Cape five and KwaZulu-Natal three.

This is the second group of nurses recruited by Life from India. The first group came in 2009 and East London received seven nurses. Two of them have since settled in the city, and continue working for Life.

Just 123 SA specialist nurses registered in six months

Life Healthcare's Group Nursing Executive Dr Sharon Vasuthevan said: "Our foreign recruitment strategy at Life Healthcare is linked to the critical shortage of specialist nurses in South Africa."

Vasuthevan said that in the past six months the SA Nursing Council registered only 123 nurses specialising in critical care,

81 in operating theatres and 22 in trauma and emergency for the entire country.

She said the group planned to train 120 specialist nurses annually for the next four years through the Life College of Learning and at universities across the country.

The nurses from India help fill the current gap while South African nurses are freed to do their specialist studies. "We see this as a win-win situation," she said.

Vasuthevan said India was chosen for its excellent training and the international mobility of its nurses, especially those with an interest in working in South Africa.

Source: Daily Dispatch via I-Net Bridge

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