

A NEW NORM IN HEALTH SCIENCE EDUCATION FOR SOUTH AFRICA

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we think about training our future healthcare practitioners.

Lockdown, social distancing and remote access to education have become the new way of life. Health science students and academics across Africa are impacted by this new normal, with students being sent home to stay safe. Students and lecturers have had to adapt to online teaching and learning, which require access to electronic devices and innovative online platforms.

Researchers from the University of KwaZulu-Natal have written a commentary on COVID-19 and its influence on health science education in South Africa. The commentary looks at the landscape of the country and how it differs between South African universities in terms of resources and accessibility. It draws on the specific challenges faced by former black universities, where the students – most of whom are from rural and township communities – are encountering the most challenges related to online learning.

“South African universities need tailor-made approaches to address local disparities,” says Professor Verusia Chetty.

The authors describe the post-COVID-19 era, which will almost certainly see blended



Health science educators need to rethink the way they teach in the future.

learning that combines online educational approaches with traditional classroom methods. They mention that this could become integrated into higher education practices.

They also discuss the clinical training needs of health science students. “Health science educators need to rethink how they teach, and question what they teach and what they are preparing students for within a South African healthcare future.”

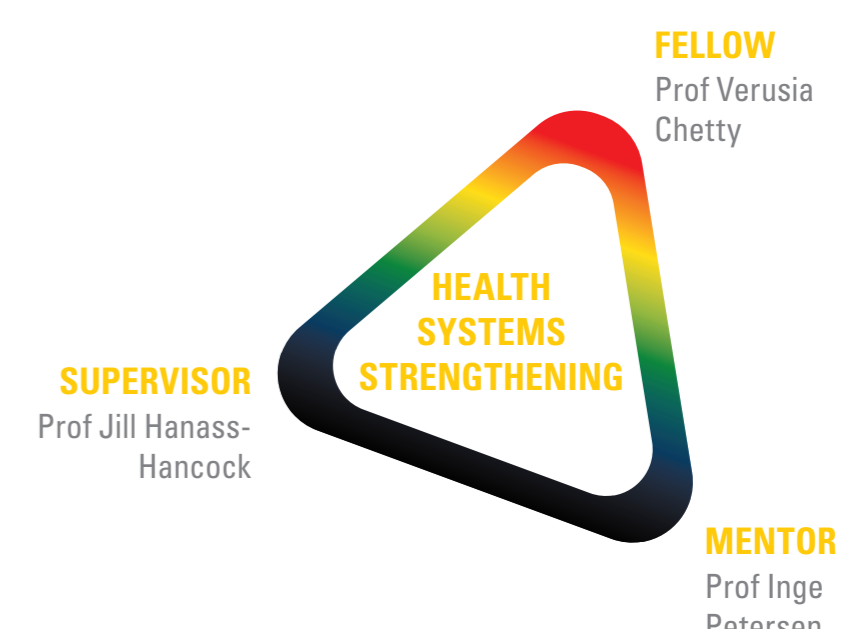


Towards Research Leadership

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