



# **Emergency Medicine Society of South Africa**

**PRACTICE GUIDELINE  
EM011**

**ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT COURSES**

EMSSA recognises the important role that Advanced Life Support courses play in emergency care. The aim of this Practice Guideline is to clarify EMSSA's position on the role of these courses in Emergency Medicine practice for specialists and non-specialists, nurses and paramedics in this field.

Excluding the cover page, this Practice Guideline is **2** pages.

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*EMSSA Practice Guidelines provide advice on recommended practice for emergency centres, emergency personnel and emergency care activities.*

*The information within these papers statements is advice only. EMSSA will not be held liable for clinical outcomes related to these Guidelines.*

In South Africa many internationally accredited Advanced Life Support (ALS) courses are available. These include (amongst others) Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS), Advanced Paediatric Life Support (APLS) and Paediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), amongst others.

The aim of these courses is to provide basic competence in ALS protocols and skills. They provide focused training and standardised management algorithms. ALS courses are useful for all those involved in emergency care, as they provide a structured, stepwise approach to patient care with the emphasis on the acquisition of related procedural skills.

They may be used by non-specialists in Emergency Medicine as evidence of interest and review of specific areas of knowledge or skills. EMSSA acknowledges the valuable role these courses play in improving the quality of emergency care nationally. Hospitals may wish to stipulate current registration in a number of these courses as employment requirements for certain categories of doctors (junior Emergency Centre doctors, for example).

ALS courses are evidence based but they are **not** the standard of care: they provide safe practice guidelines, rather than best practice.

For Emergency Physicians, the qualification of FCEM(SA) or MMed(EM) supersedes these short courses. These courses should not be used as requirements for employment of Emergency Physicians in Emergency Centres.

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