# 3.QUALITY STANDARD(S) APPLICABLE TO REPORT / PROJECT

Quality standards serve as vital frameworks in ensuring consistency, adherence to best practices, and international compatibility across various fields (Jerry, 2020). The goals of cancer diagnosis and treatment programs are to provide the highest quality of life for cancer survivors while also trying to cure or significantly prolong the lives of patients (Organization, 2024). As we embark on the implementation of the Clinical Decision Support System (CDSS) tailored for cancer care, it's essential to uphold these standards. In this section, we will focus on several standards that nurses must adhere to when treating and diagnosing cancer.

National Cancer Control Program (NCCP)

The National Cancer Control Program (NCCP) is a comprehensive framework developed by the government to address the prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care of cancer within a country (Agency, 2023). It typically includes strategic plans, policies, and initiatives aimed at reducing the burden of cancer and improving outcomes for patients (Programme, 2023). In practice, the NCCP defines fundamental goals and priorities for cancer control, including but not limited to advocating for healthy lifestyles to prevent cancer, putting screening programs into place for early detection, guaranteeing access to high-quality medical care and supportive services, and strengthening research and surveillance initiatives to track cancer patterns. (Technicians, 2024). Overall, the NCCP serves as a guiding framework to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to cancer control, with the goal to reduce the incidence and mortality of cancer, to improve the quality of life for cancer patients and survivors, and to mitigate the social and economic impact of the disease on individuals and society.

South African Nursing Council (SANC) Guidelines:

The South African Nursing Council (SANC) guidelines provide a framework for nurses delivering cancer care, ensuring high standards of practice and patient-centred care (Council S. A., 2020). Nurses specializing in oncology undergo specialized education and training, adhering to the scope of practice outlined by SANC (Staff, 2023). They uphold ethical principles in their interactions with cancer patients, respecting autonomy and promoting informed decision-making (Mary Johnson, 2024). Continuous professional development is encouraged to keep nurses updated on advancements in cancer care (DAVIDS, 2006). Collaborative teamwork with healthcare professionals ensures holistic and coordinated care throughout the cancer journey, ultimately contributing to improved outcomes for patients across South Africa (Council, 2024).

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Guidelines

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Guidelines serve as essential tools in nursing practice, integrating research evidence with clinical expertise and patient preferences to inform decision-making. Nurses evaluate and integrate research findings into their practice, tailoring care plans to meet individual patient needs (Dr. Tiffany Avery, 2020). Implementation of EBP guidelines involves adopting standardized protocols and interventions, with ongoing monitoring of patient outcomes to ensure effectiveness (Victoria, 2021). Healthcare organizations and professional bodies are responsible for developing and disseminating EBP guidelines, while nurses are expected to stay updated on current recommendations relevant to their practice (Randa Elsheikh, 2023). Ultimately, EBP guidelines contribute to improved quality and safety in patient care by ensuring that interventions are based on the best available evidence (Town, 2022).

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| **South African Cancer Control Timeline Summarized** | | |
| **Year** | **Event** | **Outcome** |
| 1986 | Pathology Based National Cancer Registry established | Pathology Based National Cancer Registry established. |
| 1991 | South African Bone Marrow Registry (SABMR) established | 65,000 South African donors registered; access to 20 million global donors. |
| 1993 | Tobacco Control Act 83 of 1993 | South Africa first country to regulate tobacco use and sales. SA joins WHO Tobacco Convention in 2005 |
| 1998 | First National Cancer Control Plan (NCCP) developed and approved | Cervical Cancer Policy implemented with national screening guidelines. |
| 2011 | CANCER ALLIANCE established. | Calls to update NCCP; NDoH calls for unified cancer community consultation. |
| 2016 | Consultative meetings on Breast Health Policy held. | Commitment for policy finalization by March 2016, but no further developments. |

*Figure 1: to see the full source timeline visit the web document ( SOUTH-AFRICAN-CANCER-CONTROL-ROADMAP, 2019)*

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