# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 10**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 01)**

**Ms M D Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**

What support does he and/or his department intend to give in order to restore the dignity of the African people through the integration of traditional medicine in primary health care and the national health system?

###### NW957E

**REPLY:**

The Department of Health supports the integration of traditional medicine in primary health care and the national health system as follows:

(1) The Department of Health has taken steps towards the official recognition and inclusion of Traditional Medicine in the National Health System through relevant regulatory frameworks;

(2) The Traditional Health Practitioners Act, 2007 (Act No. 22 of 2007) was enacted as one of the tools to assist the Department in achieving this goal. The objectives of the Act are:

(a) to establish the Interim Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa;

(b) to make provision for control of the registration, training and practices of Traditional Health Practitioners in South Africa;

(c) to serve and protect the interests of Practitioners and those of members of the public who use the services of Traditional Health Practitioners.

(3) In implementing the Act, the Department has appointed the Interim Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa. It was established to oversee the registration and regulation of the practice of Traditional Medicine by setting practice standards. This will assist in eliminating bogus practitioners and charlatans in the practice. The Interim Traditional Health Practitioners Council has to ensure safety, efficacy and quality of services provided by Traditional Health Practitioners through the enforcement of the code of ethics and conduct.

(4) The Department has appointed the Registrar of the Interim Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa who assumed duty on 1 September 2017. The Registrar is the secretary and accounting officer of the Council and performs the functions assigned to him by the Interim Council in terms of the Act. Amongst his responsibilities is to set up institutional arrangements such as structures and systems for the registration of Traditional Health Practitioners. Registration of Traditional Health Practitioners will commence as soon as this office is capacitated and it is functional to carry out its mandate.

(5) Processes are underway to finalise the draft policy on Traditional Medicine in South Africa. The policy on Traditional Medicine will serve as a guide to avoid a clash between the traditional medicine system and western medicine. Within the context of primary health care, they should blend in a beneficial harmony, using the best features of each system, and compensating for weaknesses in each.

END.