# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1132**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 20)**

**Ms N N Chirwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Whether he will respond positively to nurses in emergency and casualty wards at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital who are calling for danger allowances because of exposure to psychiatric patients waiting for beds; if not, why not; if so, on what date will mediation take place;

(2) what measures has his department put in place to increase infrastructural capacity for psychiatric patients and wards (a) at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital and (b) other hospitals across the Republic as this is not stipulated in the annual Strategic Plan and Annual Perfomance Plan of his department?

###### NW1422E

**REPLY:**

1. As the Minister of Health, one of my key responsibilities is to ensure the health and safety of all health workers. It is an obligation put on me not only by my conscience, but also by our own legislation regarding labour and occupational health and safety. We are also signatory to International Conventions on Labour, that underpin employee health and wellness management.

In terms of the Determination and Directive on Danger Allowance in the Public Service, dated July 2017 (PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2007 as amended by Resolution 4 of 2015) Part 2: PROVISION ON DANGER ALLOWANCE, employers pay standardized danger allowance to employees who in the course of their employment experience a genuine risk to their life because of exposure to psychiatric patients.

We are also fortunate as a country that over time we have established functional and effective structures and processes that involve both organized labour and employers whereby the labour and employment issues such as this call by the nurses should be presented and evaluated. In this regard I am confident that once presented to the Public Service Bargaining Council, the Department of Health will be advised accordingly.

1. (a) Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital currently has 165 acute gazette (approved) beds. The beds are sufficient for a Tertiary Academic Hospital. More beds need to be created in the Regional and District Hospitals and need to strengthen Community-based Psychiatric services.

(b) the Annual Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan for the Department talked about 80 hospitals to be revitalized or constructed over the MTEF. All these hospitals will have a dedicated mental health ward.

END.