# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1170**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 12 JUNE 2020**

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

**Mrs M O Clarke (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

What measures did his department put in place in terms of screening and testing at schools in Gauteng?

###### NW1475E

**REPLY:**

The joint Integrated School Health Programme Task Team (ISHP TT) between the Departments of Health and of Basic Education developed the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for COVID-19 Screening in South African Schools. This applies to all public and special schools in all provinces in the country.

The purpose of the SOP is to detect potential cases of COVID-19 and efficiently manage them to avoid further transmission and risk to other learners and school personnel.

There are four important aspects of the SOP:

* To provide guidelines to the School Health Team, composed of a Professional Nurse and Enrolled Nurses, and the School Screening Team (non-clinical) staff comprising of Youth Brigades, the School Based Support Teams (SBST) are trained to screen learners and school staff for symptoms of COVID-19 including daily temperature monitoring;
* To ensure that all learners who are identified as being symptomatic through screening are managed and referred appropriately;
* To ensure that contact tracing is conducted for all those who test positive. It is the responsibility of the professional nurse and the School Health Team to liaise with the appropriate contact training team within the district;
* The School Health Team and the School Screening team are required to work very closely with members of the SBST for co-ordination purposes within the school. If the school does not have an SBST, a member of the School Management Team should be nominated and designated to perform this role. Where there are insufficient school health teams to cover every school, a professional nurse from a local clinic may be nominated to provide support to the school (every school must have direct access to a named professional nurse).

All schools developed plans which were submitted to their District (Health and Education) to indicate readiness for school re-opening. These plans outline how they will manage the screening and testing including reporting and data management within the schools and districts.

Learner Health Questionnaires were also developed, translated into all official languages and distributed for parents to complete in order to identify children with comorbidities that put them at risk of contracting severe COVID-19. School principals are responsible to provide alternatives to face-to-face learning for these learners.

END.