**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 121**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 8 FEBRUARY 2018; QUESTION PAPER NO. 1 - 2018**

**"121 Ms C King (DA) to ask the Minister of Science and Technology:**

**Whether, with reference to the research conducted by the University of Cape Town's molecular endocrinologist which found that the contraceptive Depo-Provera increases the risk of HIV, her department has conducted its own study to find out (i) whether the synthetic hormone could affect the body's immune system and increase the risk of contracting HIV; if not; (ii) why not; if so, (iii) what were the findings?"**

 **NW127E**

**REPLY:**

(i) The Department of Science and Technology has not supported studies aimed at investigating whether Depo-Provera could affect the body's immune system and increase the risk of contracting HIV.

(ii) My department is aware that there are other studies underway - that include researchers from WITS university in the "Evidence for Contraceptive Options and HIV Outcomes (ECHO) study, supported by the South African Medical Research Council- to determine the relationship, and there is therefore not a need for a duplicative study by the Department of Science and Technology.

(ii) N/A