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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1231**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER : 31 MARCH 2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 12 - 2022**

**1231. Ms A L A Abrahams (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1)  What is the total number of (a) medical assessment doctors required to service the (i) existing and (ii) forecasted SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) client base in each province and/or region and (b) vacancies in each province and/or region;

(2) Whether all SASSA medical assessment doctors have been successfully remunerated in each month since their employment; if not, what total number of doctors remain unpaid; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3)  Whether SASSA medical assessment doctors are remunerated per client or per hour; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what is the total cost breakdown of SASSA medical assessment doctors in each region?

**REPLY:**

1. (a)(i) and (ii) A total of 315 doctors are contracted by SASSA. Regional distribution is provided on table 1 below. Due to the limited supply of doctors, SASSA contracts all the doctors who respond to the call for services and meet the requirements of the bid specifications.

TABLE 1: MEDICAL ASSESSMENT DOCTORS PER REGION

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Number of Doctors 2022/23** | **Assessments 2022/23** | **Number of Doctors 2023/24** | **Projected Assessments 2023/24** | **Number of Doctors 2024/25** | **Projected Assessments 2024/25** |
| Eastern Cape  | 30 | 47,677 | 30 | 47,369 | 30 | 47,369 |
| Free State  | 32 | 48,481 | 32 | 48,168 | 32 | 48,168 |
| Gauteng  | 49 | 76,633 | 49 | 76,138 | 49 | 76,138 |
| KwaZulu-Natal  | 74 | 135,325 | 74 | 134,450 | 74 | 134,450 |
| Limpopo | 49 | 57,257 | 49 | 56,887 | 49 | 56,887 |
| Mpumalanga | 25 | 44,747 | 25 | 44,458 | 25 | 44,458 |
| Northern Cape  | 26 | 59,401 | 26 | 59,017 | 26 | 59,017 |
| North West  | 19 | 39,877 | 19 | 39,619 | 19 | 39,619 |
| Western Cape  | 11 | 104,570 | 18 | 103,894 | 22 | 103,894 |
| **TOTAL**  | **315** | **613,968** | **322** | **610,000** | **326** | **610,000** |

In the Western Cape, assessments are also done by the Department of Health through Service Level Agreements held with the District Health Systems.

The increase in the number of directly contracted assessing doctors is specifically to deal with sporadic backlog development in the Eden/Karoo areas of the Western Cape.

1 (b) There are no vacancies as SASSA does not employ doctors within their staff establishment but contracts them for a period of 3 years as service providers to conduct assessments.

1. All doctors have been paid to date for claims submitted. Table below provides details per region:

TABLE 2: PAYMENT PROFILE OF DOCTORS PER REGION

|  |
| --- |
| **Payment Profile of Doctors Per Region Whose Invoices have not been Paid**  |
| **Region** | **Number of Doctors** | **Total Number of Doctor not Paid** | **Total Amount Owed to Doctors** | **Actions to ensure that Doctors Owed are paid** |
| Eastern Cape  | 30  | 0 | 0 | None  |
| Free State  | 32  | 0 | 0 | None  |
| Gauteng  | 49  | 0 | 0 | R 601,854.96 worth of services rendered but not yet invoiced by the medical practitioner. |
| KwaZulu-Natal  |  74 | 0 | 0 | None  |
| Limpopo | 49 | 0 | 0 | None  |
| Mpumalanga | 25  | 0 |  | R401,293 worth of services rendered but not yet invoiced by the medical practitioner. |
| Northern Cape  |  26 | 0 | 0 | None  |
| North West  | 19 | 0 | 0 | None  |
| Western Cape  | 11   | 0 | 0 | R183 489,30 worth of services rendered but not yet invoiced by the medical practitioner. |
| **TOTAL**  | **315** |  |  |  |

1. Doctors are contracted and remunerated per assessment and not per hour. The total cost of assessments as at 31 March 2023 per region is detailed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Expenditure as at 31 March 2023** |
| Eastern Cape  | 9,742,460.08 |
| Free State  | 9,337,308.93 |
| Gauteng  | 13,414,069.13 |
| KwaZulu-Natal  | 26,061,820.41 |
| Limpopo | 10,615,727.60 |
| Mpumalanga | 8,281,485.36 |
| Northern Cape  | 13,388,668.93 |
| North West  | 8,263,634.98 |
| Western Cape  | 19,508,799.61 |
| **TOTAL**  | **118,613,975.03** |