**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1391**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03 JULY 2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 24 - 2020**

**1391. Ms A L A Abrahams (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) Whether her department has a safety plan for orphaned and vulnerable youth exiting Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCC) once they turn 18 years old and are no longer protected by the Children’s Act, Act 38 of 2005, and subsidised by the State to stay in the specified centres; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the specified safety plan;

(2) what number of residents over the age of 18 years is currently residing in each CYCC in each province;

(3) whether residents over the age of 18 years utilise the same living, bedroom and bathroom facilities as residents who are under the age of 18 years; if so, what are the relevant details;

(4) what is the age of the oldest resident staying in a CYCC currently? NW1762E

**REPLY:**

(1) (a) Yes.The Children’s Act 38 of 2005 makes provision for an Alternative Care Programme which is inclusive of places of safety, foster care, child and youth care centres (residential care) for vulnerable children. Whilst in alternative care, these children must be provided with a plethora of services which includes among others, the provision of independent living programs. These services are designed to help children and young persons’ transition from alternative care to living independently as productive citizens through structured life skills and educational programmes.

There are transitional and independent living plans based on assessment conducted which focus on assessment of life skills in preparation for life skills training, basic education skills and other skills in preparation for post-secondary education. The assessment of skills is a critical step in designing an individualized independent living plan for any child which is to be reviewed after every six months. These plans indicate steps the child will take to meet his/her goal as well as to outline the task the child will undertake to meet specific challenges identified on his/her personal independent living assessment. The plan must be developed 90 days prior to the date the young person will be discharged from alternative care system at the age of 18 years or older.

There are important considerations when developing the plan. The plan must be based on the child’s strengths and needs with clearly outlined goals and objectives; identification and linking of the child with community services to turn to if he/she need assistance; connecting the child with the adult mentor in the community for mentorship, provision of support, advocacy and assistance with personal, academic and career development.

(b) Yes, Provincial departments are subsidising NGOs to provide services to children to remain in alternative care beyond the age of 18yrs in terms of Section 176(1). Children’s Act, Act 38/2005 makes provision that children turning 18 and are still busy with school can remain in a Child and Youth Care Centre until the age of 21 if they need to complete grade 12, should they prefer to. The court orders are extended in terms of Section 176 whilst the youth is still in school but once they have completed school (Grade 12) they are discharged in terms of Section 175.

(2)**Table below indicates the number of residents over the age of 18 years who are currently residing in CYCCs in each province:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** |  **Beyond 18yrs** |
| Free State |  59 |
| North West |  53 |
| Gauteng |  138 |
| Eastern Cape |  45 |
| Western Cape | CYCC =71 & DSD CYCC =52 |
| Limpopo |  34 |
| KZN |  72 |
| Northern Cape | 3 |
| Mpumalanga |  64 |

(3)**Table below outlines relevant details of residents over the age of 18 years utilising the same living, bedroom and bathroom facilities as residents who are under the age of 18 years:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Response** |
| Free State | All Residents are treated as children in the Youth Care Centre and therefore they all utilize the same facilities and abide by the same rules and standards that are expected from the younger children. The 18 year old youths are given a conduct contract to sign with the extension of their Section 176 order and they are fully aware that they are expected to conduct themselves like the children in the youth care centre for their duration of time in the Youth Care Centre, no exceptions to the rules is allowed. |
| North West | CYCCs differ in terms of their models. SOS is a household or family type of care and young person’s stay with others like typical siblings would. Other CYCCs resemble dormitories type where care givers are assigned to care for a particular number of children andare classified according to age. Mainly they reside together with others to foster sense of belonging. |
| Gauteng | No, children are placed as per their age group, and there is supervision at all times as per the Norms and standards. |
| Eastern Cape | This varies from one CYCC to another as it is determined by the number of those over 18, available infrastructure and equipment. However, those who move easily and quicker out of the centre create an opportunity for the long term placements. In some centres they are sharing with 14 year olds and above, in others they have their own bedrooms only sharing a communal kitchen, living room and bathroom which promotes the desired level of independence. Some where possible are allocated a room in the same block as the Child and Youth Care Workers / Caregivers. |
| Western Cape | CYCCs are responsible for the living arrangements of all residents within their care. Some CYCCs have independent living cottages on the premises, while others have dedicated rooms for those 18 and above. If they have a dedicated room they do share the living room and bathroom with other residents.In terms of DSD own centres, the residents are placed in separate rooms and where sufficient numbers in a separate unit. |
| Limpopo | Living arrangement is done according to age group and over 18 years do not share bedrooms with the under 18 years. However, they utilize the same living and bathroom under the supervision of carers.The children shower at specific times according to their ages and under the supervision of carers. |
| KZN | Residents are allocated cottage and are housed according to their age groups and gender. Youth aged 16yrs and over are grouped together. At some facilities those young people who are in matric have single rooms and other facilities have separate quarters for over 18 years.Each young person has his/her own bed and living space.Ablution facilities and living rooms are shared.  |
| Northern Cape | 1= has own room as he is also in matric1=Shares room with 17-18yrs age group1=There is only one room in the CYCC for all children, the child shares with other children. |
| Mpumalanga | * In all the districts CYCCs children over the age of 18 reside in the senior sections for boys and girls separately.
* In those centres where there are dormitories 18 year olds will share amongst each other.
* Where there are houses a specific house will accommodate the 18 yearsand above and there will be a house for boys and house for girls.
* In some CYCCs they rent a flat for them outside the premises of the centre and assist them in getting employment and sponsors for them until they are solely independent which is the maximum age of 23 though the number is not very high.
 |

(4)**Table below illustrates the age of the oldest resident currently staying in a CYCC:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Response** |
| Free State | 20 years  |
| North West | 20years |
| Gauteng | 21 years. |
| Eastern Cape | 21 years old. |
| Western Cape | 21 years old. |
| Limpopo | 20 years |
| KZN | 22 years |
| Northern Cape | 19 years |
| Mpumalanga | 23 years |