# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 147**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 01)**

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

(a) What steps does he intend to take in response to the verbal communique issued to the hospital and clinic management of the OR Tambo Memorial Hospital in Boksburg by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Health in Gauteng that they should not engage public representatives who are on oversight without her having granted permission, which was discovered during the unannounced oversight visit at the specified hospital and (b) on what date will his department issue a follow-up communique to correct the assertion and threat to management of hospitals and clinics issued by the MEC? **NW152E**

**REPLY:**

It is our considered view that visitations to healthcare facilities, especially hospitals, are properly arranged ahead of time, with the relevant authorities, for visitors to be accommodated in the schedule and operations of the facility. This is so because all staff in our healthcare facilities are extremely busy all the time and if the visitation is not pre-arranged or arranged in an orderly manner, the operations of the facility will be negatively affected. Honourable Members are very well aware that our facilities are overburdened with demand for healthcare services, while at the same time experiencing shortages of staff of various sorts. We therefore do not want the staff in these facilities to operate in an unplanned and uncoordinated manner as this could even result in the Honourable Members ending up not receiving proper attention being taken on walk-abouts or being attended to by staff during such visits. The risk is therefore that the same Honourable Members will as a result complain that they went on a visit and they were not attended to and that no one was available to answer their questions. Also, the Honourable Member will wonder around in the facility and have a risk of causing even more disruption. It is our considered view therefore that visits by everyone to our healthcare facilities, including public representatives, are pre-arranged, but that in the case of Members of Parliament, such visits are further coordinated under the auspices of the relevant Parliamentary Committee. In this way, the Honourable Members will make a positive contribution in improving the quality of healthcare service delivery in our healthcare facilities in particular, and in the entire healthcare system in general.

The Honourable Member is well aware that a healthcare facility is a very sensitive area and allowing uncontrolled access to any healthcare facility poses risks to staff and patients both in terms of security as well as infection control.

END.