# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1477**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 25)**

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

Given the coronavirus pandemic and its effect on public health facilities with its diminishing supply of oxygen that is becoming a crisis, what plans does his department have and/or will it implement to secure resources that will ensure that the supply of oxygen for Covid-19 patients will not be under stress?

###### NW1848E

**REPLY:**

The National Department of Health (NDoH) and National Treasury have together estimated the quantity of oxygen required to meet the COVID-19 surge demands based on the SURGE modelling data. National Treasury has thus expanded the existing contracts to cater for the anticipated additional needs. The two Departments have also undertaken a process of engaging the suppliers to ensure that they can supply the demand and have measures in place to keep their skilled drivers safe from COVID-19. The NDOH has undertaken a process to review existing bulk storage capacity at identified hospitals and to review oxygen reticulation circuits by using qualified clinical engineers. Hospitals that do not have adequate reticulation will be fast tracked to improve their reticulation systems to ensure major respiratory support devices can be used effectively. Hospitals that do not have adequate bulk storage tanks will have alternate solutions devised for them as per the recommendations of the clinical and mechanical engineers. National Treasury has increased the capacity of supply by contracting Air Liquide as the second service provider for the supply of oxygen. Both Afrox and Air Liquide have written letters of undertaking to guarantee the sustainable supply of oxygen during the peak.

END.