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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER:25/2020**

**1509.  Mrs D van der Walt (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1)       What measures has her department put in place to attend to the dire need for professional staff such as nurses, psychologists and therapists in (a) ordinary schools and (b) schools for learners with special educational needs;

(2)       whether she intends to make use of students performing their community service year to assist the specified schools; if not, why not; if so, what are the further relevant details?

**Response**

(1) (a) (b) The Department of Basic Education (DBE)  has developed the *National draft Guidelines for Resourcing and Inclusive Education* system. The proposed guidelines deal with resourcing as it relates to the inclusive education system as a whole. This system comprises Special Schools, Special Schools/Resource Centres, Full-service Schools, Ordinary Public Schools, and District-based Support Teams. It addresses barriers in two focal areas: 1) teaching and learning and 2) psycho-social and health support.

The document motivates for the development of an integrated and holistic approach which does not separate support provisioning of special and ordinary schools from that of districts and aims at strengthening support to all learners who experience barriers to learning in the system on a continuum from low to high intensity support.

The Guidelines must be seen as a key procedure to ensure the transformation of the education system towards an inclusive education system in line with the prescripts of *Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (2001).* Furthermore it calls for the appointment of healthcare professionals within the education system, in all educational institutions and offices so that learners are provided with a holistic intervention approach. The guidelines are being costed by provincial Education Departments PEDs), and a phased in strategy will be used to ensure that critical healthcare professional posts needed by provinces are filled.

(2) Community service students are required by government to complete their community service year in a clinical institution. This allows them to put into practice their clinical knowledge, so as to gain clinical experience. If the clinical institution (hospital/clinic) provides an outreach community programme, where the student can provide services to a an educational institution, the Department of Basic Education would by all means accept the services to be rendered by the community service individual. The department also encourages Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to allow students still obtaining their degree/diploma to do their clinical practicals in different education institutions so that the student has an all rounded experience and gains insight of the education system. An example of such an initiative will be the expose of student social workers who perform their practicals at schools and also have been appointed to provide services to schools in the community in which they are based in.