# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1781**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 17)**

**Mr P A van Staden (FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) What is the (a) state of readiness of the Government’s facilities regarding the cold chain of COVID-19 vaccines and (b) role and responsibilities of the specified facilities;

(2) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

###### NW1991E

**REPLY:**

1. (a) Government facilities providing services for childhood vaccination programmes already had cold chain capacity before COVID-19. As a result of the oral polio vaccine program in the country, most public health care establishments already have -20-degree storage capacity plus 2-8 degree storage. A cold chain audit has further assisted in informing procurement of equipment in the provinces. Provincial procurement processes have already taken place.

(b) Roles and responsibilities must be in line with the Rules relating to Good Pharmacy Practice published in terms of the Pharmacy Act 53 of 1974. All sites that store COVID-19 vaccines must have contingency plans to manage power failures, equipment breakdowns, or cold chain breaches.

1. Store the vaccine in a purpose-built vaccine refrigerator.
2. Ensure that sufficient cold chain capacity is available for all thermolabile medicines stocked, including Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) vaccines and COVID-19 vaccines.
3. Products must be stored in a temperature-regulated environment as per the manufacturer's product recommendations.
4. Enough refrigerator capacity should be available to allow orderly arrangement and air circulation.
5. WHO-approved/compliant continuous temperature recording devices must be installed.
6. Regardless of the system used, the temperature should be monitored physically twice daily.
7. The cold storage area or refrigerator must be connected to a standby generator.
8. The devices must be connected to an alarm and/or warning system in the event of a power failure or other events that may lead to temperature excursions.
9. Yes.

END.