# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2056**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 34)**

**Dr M Q Ndlozi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

Whether there is Covid-19 testing in mortuaries for deaths by natural causes not determined in other facilities such as hospitals; if so, what number of Covid-19-related deaths have been determined at the mortuaries, besides the number of deaths that were already confirmed to be related to Covid-19?

###### NW2619E

**REPLY:**

COVID-19 testing of the deceased persons is not conducted in mortuaries, however, specimen collection is done at mortuaries according to the Guidelines for COVID-19 Postmortem Testing. The specimens for COVID-19 Postmortem Testing are transported to the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) for testing.

The testing of the deceased persons applies only to persons that have died of natural causes outside of a health facility where their COVID status is not known. The reason for performing this test is to protect the close contacts of the deceased should the person have been positive then the close contacts may be infected. Secondly our death statistics for COVID do not include persons that had died of COVID outside of a health facility since nobody was aware if they were infected with COVID or not. This data will allow us to include deaths of persons outside of health facilities that are COVID positive.

According to the data from the NHLS there were 75 COVID-19 tests performed on deceased persons to date, of which 12 tests were positive.

END.