# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2165**

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

**Ms L V James (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) What is the current World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline pertaining to the number of doctors in hospitals;

(2) what number of persons are currently (a) studying towards a medical qualification and (b) employed as doctors in the country;

(3) whether his department is in compliance with the WHO guideline regarding the number of doctors in hospitals; if not, what are the reasons for the non-compliance?

###### NW2396E

**REPLY:**

(1) The World Health Organisation (WHO) provides a guideline threshold of 2:10 000 ratio of health workers (doctors, nurses and midwives) per population. Countries with a density below this threshold generally fail to achieve a targeted 80% coverage rate for skilled birth attendance and child immunisation. A population-based threshold for doctors has been extrapolated from the WHO of 0.55 doctors per 1000 population, but this cannot be applied to hospitals;

(2) (a) 1,939 is the total enrolled students studying towards medical qualification in eight medical institutions across the country;

(b) See attached spreadsheet (please note that this is only public sector data).

(3) There are no published WHO guidelines to adhere to. For the public health sector, the National Department of Health has adopted the Workload Indicator for Staffing Norms (WISN) methodology for determining staffing norms, which has been applied across Primary Health Care facilities. The methodology has not yet been launched at hospitals.

END.