# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2191**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 23)**

**Mrs C Dudley (ACDP) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Whether he has been informed of the (a) ongoing problems at the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and (b) concerns raised by affected students and their concerned parents;

(2) why the HPCSA did remarking in previous years but now students have been informed by the Medical University of South Africa that there will be no remarking;

(3) why (a) are staff of the HPCSA asking graduates with foreign qualifications to (i) submit internship and certificates of good standing and (ii) write Board exams while they have already served a 2-year internship in their country and have been admitted as doctors and (b) clinical rotation at hospitals has not been given to students from China while it has been given to students from Cuba;

(4) whether the HPCSA relies on sections 3 and 4 of the Health Professions Council of South Africa Act, Act 56 of 1974, in respect of foreign students that are not from Cuba; if so, what are the relevant details;

(5) whether he will investigate the HPCSA with regard to the specified queries and table his report in the National Assembly as soon as possible; if so, what are the relevant details?

###### NW2359E

**REPLY:**

1. (a) I am briefed from time to time about the work of the HPCSA;

(b) Please specify which students you are referring to and what their concerns are;

1. The Professional Board Examination for the Medical and Dental Professional Board is outsourced. The Board appoints a university to conduct the Board Examination. Currently Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University is contracted to conduct the Board Examination. Therefore the HPCSA and its Board is not involved in the marking or remarking;
2. (a) (i) Regulation 4 of the regulations relating to registration of persons who hold qualifications that are not prescribed for registration (published under Government Notice R101 in Government Gazette 31859 of 6 February 2009), prescribes criteria that an application for registration must meet. Sub-regulation 4(e) provides as follows: *“(e) in the case of an application for registration in a profession for which internship training is a requirement, a certificate of completed training as an intern or of similar training or experience obtained elsewhere and the programme for such training”;*

It is therefore in compliance with the law that HPCSA requires the said documents.

(ii) Section 25 of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974) provides as follows: “25. Registration of persons who hold qualifications not prescribed for registration

*(2) A professional board may require a person who holds a qualification referred to in subsection (1) and who applies for registration in terms of this section, to pass to the satisfaction of the professional board, on a date and at a place determined by the professional board, an evaluation contemplated in subsection (3) before persons appointed by the professional board, for the purpose of determining whether such person possesses adequate professional knowledge, skill and competence and whether he or she is proficient in any of the official languages of the Republic.”*

The Board examination is therefore prescribed by grievance.

(b) The HPCSA does deal with clinical rotations of students studying outside the Republic of South Africa. The HPCSA does not register students that are not studying in South Africa. Section 17 of the Act regulates registration of persons who wish to practise their profession in the Republic of South Africa;

(4) Sections 3 and of the Act relate to the objects and functions of Council and General powers of Council, respectively, and have no direct bearing on foreign students, whether from Cuba or elsewhere.

The HPCSA does not register students that are not studying in South Africa. Section 17 of the Act regulates registration of persons who wish to practise their profession in the Republic of South Africa;

(5) As stated in response to (1) above, I will furnish Parliament with a report as soon as I have engaged on the matter.

END.