# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2331**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 24)**

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

(1) Whether he has been informed of Mrs Erna Jansen van Vuuren (details furnished) who was admitted to the Steve Biko Academic Hospital in Pretoria on Sunday, 22 May 2022, with stage 4 cancer and who died on Wednesday, 25 May 2022; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the reasons that the specified patient was placed in a tent outside the specified hospital when the patient was admitted;

(2) whether he has been informed if the patient received sufficient medical treatment during the stay in the tent; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details of the treatment received;

(3) whether he has been informed of the (a) reason that the patient was initially admitted and (b) cause of death; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

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

###### NW2751E

**REPLY:**

1. Yes, I have been informed about the said patient, including why she was admitted I have also been informed that the patient received adequate medical treatment whilst she was in the tent.

I wish to raise my concern regarding exposing patient’s names and conditions I as in the public domain as in the Department of Health we are bound by the patient-doctor confidentiality, however I wish to respond as follow regarding the context of patients being admitted into the tent is as follows:

* The response to the COVID-19 pandemic at Steve Biko Academic Hospital wanted additional infrastructure to manage the COVID-19 suspected and confirmed patients and limiting risk of exposure to patients who were confirmed to be virologically negative.
* Tents are well ventilated and fully equipped as wards. This was the immediate response to the then rapidly progressing pandemic, where semi-formal structures were erected.
* The semi-formal structures added an additional 30 beds to treat the COVID-19 patients and remedy the challenges with space and enabled Steve Biko Academic Hospital to as far as possible, continue with rendering the non-COVID-19’s highly specialised services and not to utilize the regular patient beds to accommodate person under investigations (PUIs).
* Tents have enabled Steve Biko Academic Hospital to be in the position to successfully manage Priority 1 and Priority 3 COVID-19 suspected patients.
* As with all patients who had respiratory symptoms, the patient in question presented to Steve Biko Academic Hospital and admitted as a person under investigation (PUI) on the 22/05/22 and was admitted to Ward 8.2, gynaecology ward on the 24/05/22 where the patient subsequently demised on the 25/05/2022 at 11h35min**.**
* The details regarding the detailed treatment of the said patient are available and will not presented here as these are deemed confidential as per patient doctor confidentiality.

1. No, I will not make any statement regarding this matter, this to maintain patient-doctor relationship in accordance with health care professionalism. The matter was raised as a complaint and the prescribed complaints management processes were followed. The patient received an optimal treatment for her condition.

END.