# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2353**

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

**Ms H Ismail (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(a) What has been the total number of specialist trained nurses over the past 10 years and (b) where have they been allocated during the specified period?

###### NW2775E

**REPLY:**

(a) According to the information as received from the South African Nursing Council (SANC) the total number of specialist nurses who completed their studies and registered as nursing specialists over the past 10 years period, is **52 887**, as per table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Nurse category** | **Output per year** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **Grand Total** |
| Specialist Nurses | 5185 | 6321 | 4722 | 6211 | 6010 | 5494 | 4941 | 5530 | 3508 | 4965 | **52 887** |

**\*Statistics obtained from South African Nursing Council**

(b) According to the records as drawn from the Persal System on 31 May 2022, the table below indicate the number of nursing specialists appointed in the public service, in each province, over the reporting 10 years period (per financial year):





















**\*Data extracted from the PERSAL System dated 31 May 2022**

It is important to inform the Honourable Member that the trend of high number of production of specialist nurses vs low number of appointment (in the public sector) is because of a number of factors but not limited to:

1. Some nurse specialists are absorbed by the private sector after qualifying as specialists;
2. Some nurse specialists especially ICU trained prefer to work for agencies as proven during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic;
3. Some nurses underwent training towards *non-clinical specialty*programs such as Nursing Management and Nursing Education, as a way of preparing themselves for future career prospects when they apply to be managers etc. Incidentally, these two programs are the ones with higher production (see SANC data). It has also been empirically proven that sometimes nurses study for these programs to add bars on their epaulets as each one has a distinct bar, silver and white respectively;
4. Some specialist nurse already employed within an Organization, may study towards a specialty of their choice as part of life-long learning not necessarily to be absorbed within that specialty. As an example, a nurse educator at a college may further pursue studies in Primary Health Care (PHC), so that they can teach PHC in the future but already employed as Specialist (nurse educator); and
5. Finally, in contrast, another example is psychiatric nurses who decide to study for the Occupational Nursing specialty just out of curiosity but not necessarily to work in an OHS environment.

END.