# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2388**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 38)**

**Ms N N Chirwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Whether his department has a system in place to scrutinise the quality of personal protective equipment in all (a) hospitals and (b) clinics; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) (a) where do healthcare workers report quality issues and (b) how does his department intervene when such grievances are raised by healthcare workers?

###### NW2963E

**REPLY:**

1. The National Department of Health in collaboration with South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) and the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) set the quality standards for the various personal protective equipment items. Each province is responsible for ensuring that the quality standards of PPE procured are maintained. The National Department of Health has also supported the provinces with availing a Policy on Respiratory Protective Equipment and a list of PPE specifications that provinces can utilise to guide the PPE procurement process. In addition, PPE quality assurance training was conducted for provinces. The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) also provides support to the manufacturers and distributors in respect of applicable standards and conformity assessments to assist them to prepare for the licensing and approval processes. The Department of Health intends to approach National Treasury to seek approval for single sourcing of Quality Assurance Companies to undertake assessment of the PPE procured and to be delivered in all health care facilities for quality assessment. This will ensure that such PPE is of acceptable quality and standards. This intervention will be executed in line with or in compliance to section 79 of the Public Finance Management Act, which allows organs of state to apply for deviations from open competitive bidding process based on good grounds and urgency of this matter in protecting health care workers. This is to further ensure that health care workers are provided with PPE that is complaint to standards and quality requirements subject to concurrence and approval of National Treasury.
2. Each province, district and facility have Occupational Health and Safety Committees that since 1 October 2020 are verifying the availability of PPE reported by health facilities on the Stock Visibility System on a weekly basis. The Occupational Health and Safety grievance processes are followed at a local level and escalated accordingly.

END.