# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2465**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 27)**

**Mrs C C S Motsepe (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

What are the reasons that the elderly had not received assistance regarding vaccinations at their homes in the same manner that volunteers went house to house over the voting period?

###### NW2884E

**REPLY:**

The health system has limited capacity to provide vaccinations in people’s homes. Factors that contribute to this include the fact that the vaccine must be administered by a health professional, that open vials of vaccine (5 doses) cannot be transported between different locations, that the vaccinee must be observed for 15 minutes (or in some cases 30 minutes) following vaccination and that emergency equipment must always be available during administration of vaccines.

Local health services are however encouraged to assist elderly and disabled persons who are unable to attend vaccination sites, including through provision of vaccination in people’s homes. Community health workers who visit households play an important role in establishing linkage between such persons and local vaccination sites.

Additional strategies used by the Vaccine Programme to reach elderly people include:

* Vaccination of people in congregate settings especially in old-age homes.
* Setting up outreach and pop-up sites at locations where older persons congregate such as at SASSA pay-points.
* Encouraging younger people to assist elderly people to access sites.
* Ensuring that all sites prioritise the elderly to avoid long waiting times.
* Piloting the provision of R100 grocery vouchers for older persons to offset costs associated with vaccination such as costs associated with transport.

END.