# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 264**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 02)**

**Mr D W Macpherson (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Whether, since the implementation of the Health Promotion Levy, his department conducted any research into its effect on levels of obesity in the Republic; if not, why not; if so, (a) who conducted the research, (b) on what date was the research conducted, (c) what did the research reveal about the effectiveness of the levy, (d) what is the reason that the research has not been made public and (e) on what date will the research be made public;

(2) whether the research has been shared with the National Treasury; if not, why not; if so,

(3) whether there has been any discussion of the research between his department and the National Treasury; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the discussions;

(4) whether there are any plans to conduct such research now or in the future; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW268E**

**REPLY:**

(1) (a) No specific research has been conducted on the effect of Health Promotion Levy (HPL) on obesity, however, studies have been conducted on the effects of HPL on the consumption of Sugar Sweetened Beverages.

(b)-(c) Scientists have shown that the HPL is working, for example, evidence shows that in the first year after the introduction of the HPL, urban household purchases of sugary beverages fell by 51% (Stacey et al, 2021). Similar results were shown in young adults in Langa Cape Town (Essman et al, 2022) where a 37% in volume and 31% in sugar intake was demonstrated. In Soweto, the frequency of Sugar Sweetened Beverages (SSB) intake amongst heavy consumers fell from 10 beverages per week before the tax to 4 beverages per week one year later (Wrottesley et al 2020).

(d) The results on the effectiveness of SSBs on consumption are published papers that are accessible to the public.

(e) Not Applicable

(2) Yes, the research has been shared with National Treasury by the researchers.

(3) There has not been any discussion between the DOH and National Treasury on above mentioned studies by the Department since the researchers shared the results directly with National Treasury.

(4) There is currently no planned research focussing only on the impact of HPL on obesity. The Department is finalising the Dietary intake study which will reveal other foods including those with sugar that are consumed by South Africans. The information will assist the Department to identify additional interventions that should be taken to control obesity and reduce the risks of NCDs. Considering that Obesity is caused by multiple factors, with sugar being the major contributor.

END.