# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 2652**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 26)**

**Ms S J Nkomo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**

Whether his department has taken any steps to (a) monitor initiation schools in the country and (b) ensure that the nurses and surgeons in attendance at these initiation schools have the requisite training; if so, what are the relevant details in each case?

###### NW3060E

**REPLY:**

Honourable Member, let me mention upfront that the establishment of initiation schools is under the control of the Department of Coorperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta).

As Health, we play a supportive role in terms of the health needs of initiates. Together with Cogta, we have negotiated with CONTRALESA (the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa) whereby the Department will make available a sum of R20 million per Province. With this money, the traditional leader should look for medical doctors who are also practitioners and affiliates of that particular culture and have themselves gone through cultural initiation schools, to take care of the health needs of the initiates and to perform the actual circumcision, including post-operative care.

Some traditional leaders have accepted this option and where it is implemented, there is absolutely no death or no amputations.

However, some are still very resistant to this proposal and that is where death commonly occurs. A large number of deaths happen in illegal schools which are unknown even to the traditional leaders.

END.