# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 3569**

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

**Ms M D Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**

Whether, in view of recent research that calculates that overweight and obesity issues are costing the Republic’s health system R33 billion a year (details furnished) and that this suggests an urgent need for preventative, population-level interventions to reduce overweight and obesity rates, his department has a strategy in place to address the specified issues; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW4375E**

**REPLY:**

The cited research estimated the direct healthcare costs associated with treatment of weight-related conditions which included cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders, respiratory diseases, and digestive diseases. The Department has strategies in place to address obesity and weight related conditions.

The strategy for the prevention and control of obesity in South Africa 2015 – 2020, has six goals dealing with intersectoral collaboration, importance of physical activity, prevention in early childhood, accessibility to healthy food choices, education of communities, and surveillance and monitoring and evaluation. This strategy has been reviewed using interrogation of the theory of change in line with South Africa’s international policy commitments and national legislation, policy and plans, a literature review of international and national good practices, wide stakeholder engagement through online survey, physical meetings, and a national workshop. The outcome of the review informed the drafting of the updated Obesity Strategy with set goals, specific objectives, and activities to reduce obesity rates in South Africa. The focus of the draft updated Obesity Strategy is on empowering South Africans to make healthy choices by enabling equitable access to healthy food, physical activity opportunities and a capacitated health care system that supports the prevention and management of obesity. The updated Obesity Strategy will be finalised by the end of this financial year (2022/23).

END.