# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 3689**

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

**Dr S S Thembekwayo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

Noting the high shortage of theatre nurses across the Republic, what steps has his department put in place to fill relevant vacancies? **NW4516E**

**REPLY:**

The Department acknowledges that Theatre Nurses are amongst other imperative categories of Health Care Workers that are marginally available in the Health System, particularly in the Public Health Sector. This amongst others is due to the shortage in numbers and the competition of these resources between the Public Health Sector, Private Sector and Developed Countries.

Further to the above fact, the general budget cuts in the Public Service in the past three financial years (including the Cost of Employment) has negatively affected filling of posts. As a result, not all posts can be filled simultaneously. This has resulted in stringent measures implemented to control filling of positions including key line function posts to avoid over expenditure on CoE.

However, to ensure that services are at least not affected, the Department of Health has implemented the following strategies, amongst others:

* Prioritisation of the posts in the Annual Recruitment Plan – where funding permits
* Prioritisation of the posts for conditional grant funding
* Filling of replacement posts considered and approved weekly
* Employment of health professionals on contract bases to strengthen capacity
* Prioritization of these categories for contract employment and to permanent employment where funding permits at the end of their contracts

Awarding of bursaries yearly to internal and external candidates to study further in various disciplines including Theatre Nurses.

END.