**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 3867 (Oral 746 transferred)**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 28 OCTOBER 2022**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 42)**

**Ms H Ismail (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

Given that there is a shortage of doctors in the public health sector, what steps has his department taken to ensure that community service doctors awaiting placement for a year and/or longer are placed quickly in the public health sector?

**NW4820E**

**REPLY:**

The Department has put in place processes to alleviate unnecessary waiting period for eligible applicants who are due to perform community service as doctors:

There are two annual allocation cycles. The first annual cycle allocates a sizeable number of applicants who are eligible by 30th of December to commence duty on 1 January of each year and the second (midyear) cycle allocates applicants who could not take up positions in January, thus allowing them to take up posts in July. The System ensures that there are no applicants who wait for a period of one year and/or longer to do community service, unless if the person voluntarily opts to wait longer due to personal reasons. Amongst other reasons, applicants state that they will wait to be allocated at their preferred cities, due to religious beliefs. This means they do not want to serve at rural and underserved areas defeating the purpose of the objective of the Community Service Policy. .

The Department has also put in place financial means to ensure that all statutory community service posts for medical doctors are absorbed within the Provincial Equitable Share and the Human Resources Training Grant (HRTG) Budgets.

END.