# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 4021**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 44)**

**Mrs M O Clarke (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Following reports that the current nursing shortage in public health care stands at 1 nurse per 218 patients and noting that a total number of 12 000 posts are vacant in the public health sector, (a) what steps has his department taken to fill such posts and (b)(i) in which provinces will the specified vacancies be filled and (ii) what number of the total number of vacant posts will be filled;

(2) whether his department will be partnering with Temporary Employment Services to address the shortages; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what total number of posts in each province will be filled using the specified partnership? **NW5028E**

**REPLY:**

After consulting with the Provincial Departments of Health, the Minister is convinced that Provincial Departments of Health have developed efficient and effective plans to ensure that despite financial challenges they encounter within the Cost of Employment (COE), viable plans have been developed to sustain service delivery across all nine Provinces. This is substantiated by the information in the table below:

| **Question** | **EC** | **FS** | **GAU** | **KZN** | **LIM** | **MPU** | **NW** | **NC** | **WC** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1(a) what steps has his department taken to fill such posts | The Department has approved its Annual Recruitment Plan for 2022/23 which comprises 1057 critical posts (including nursing) to be filled. The funding emanated from equitable share and conditional grants.  Advertisements are published monthly and posts have been filled, whilst others are still in selection phases. | Due to the current pressure on the compensation of employees, the department has appointed a Recruitment Task Team that looks at reprioritization of critical posts in line with the available budget | As of the 30th September 2022, there were 4 392 unfunded vacant nursing posts in the organisational structure of the Gauteng Department of Health. The Department has requested for additional funds to fill the critical vacant nursing posts. | As at 31 October 2022, the Department has prioritized filling of 426 Nursing posts:  Professional Nurses 176  Staff Nurses 164  Nursing Assistants 86 | The Department has advertised professional nurses’ posts, already shortlisted and interviews have been conducted. | The Department Annually identifies critical posts and demands that need to be filled throughout the year.  The Department has the following posts with no funding to fill them however, identified to be critical to ensure continuity of quality health care in the province. | The Department identified critical vacant nursing posts vacated prior to 01 April 2022 to be filled during the 2022/23 financial year within the available compensation of employees' budget. Posts are filled as soon as possible considering the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)'s prescripts in terms of advertising, shortlisting, interviews and verification processes | The Department prioritised the filling of the critical and scarce skills within the nursing fraternity. The HR Plan addresses the need as a priority for the 2022/2023 financial | Vacancies are filled on a continuous basis through block adverts and recruitment throughout the year in response to the service demands. |
| 1(b)(i) in which provinces will the specified vacancies be filled and (ii) what number of the total number of vacant posts will be filled) | The department prioritized the filling of 867 posts (i.e. 230 permanent vacant posts in different categories, including Operational Managers, Professional Nurses: General, Professional Nurses: Specialty, Staff Nurses and Nursing Assistants and 637 Professional Nurses: General under the Vaccination Programme for a contract period of twelve (12) months). | The department prioritized the filling of 477 nursing posts dependant on availability of the budget | Awaiting for approval of additional funds | The department prioritized the filling of nursing posts in levels of care as they become vacant | A total of 254 posts ranging from Nursing Manager to the level of Nursing Assistant will be filled | A total of 155 staff Nurses for various hospitals and PHC Centres and 142 posts that are vacated, earmarked to be filled by Specialised nurses in the following fields of speciality: Oncology, Trauma, Advanced Midwifery, Surgery, Ophthalmic, ICU, Theatre, and Nephrology. | A total of 233 nursing posts will be filled (Professional Nurses for District Health Services = 147and Professional Nurses for Hospital and Clinical Support Services = 86) | The department is prioritising the filling of speciality and supervisory/managerial posts. The following total number per category will be filled; Operational Manager General/Speciality – 30, Assistant Managers General/Speciality – 20 and Professional Nurse General/Speciality – 30. Total - 80 | As at 17 October 2022, the Western Cape had 808 vacant funded nursing posts that are being in the process of being filled. |

1. Eight Provincial Departments of Health conduct their own advertisement and recruitment processes; and do not involve any other Employment Services. Only the Western Cape has partnered with agency personnel to supplement its capacity details of which were not provided in the response.

END.