# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 409**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19 FEBRUARY 2021**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 02)**

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

Whether, given that a number of interns and community service doctors were not paid salaries for January in Gauteng, were there other doctors in these categories who were not paid and/or experienced any delays throughout the Republic from 1 January 2020 to date; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what (a) total number and (b) were the reasons for the delays and non-payment?

###### NW415E

**REPLY:**

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the 2020 learning programs at Higher Education Institutions, resulting in Medical Students completing their final year studies late in December 2020. There was also a recorded delay for serving medical interns who were transitioning to community service: medical officer posts from 1 January 2021. The delayed completion, impacted on the finalization of the professionals registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), which is amongst others, one of the requirement for commencement of duty in a health facility.

Despite all these challenges, Provincial Departments of Health made provision to ensure viable appointments of health professionals (i.e. medical interns and community service doctors) are captured and finalized as soon as all the required documents are receipt.

The National Department of Health hereby confirms that Provincial Departments of Health across all Provinces, despite the challenges outlined above, managed to capture and finalize appointments of medical interns and community service and salaries have been paid successfully in this professionals bank accounts during the periods 31 January 2021 to 15 February 2021.

The only remaining challenge was in the Northern Cape where one medical intern and one community service doctor, who commenced duty from 1 January 2021 have not yet received salary due to the fact that at the time of capturing the appointment on the PERSAL System, the Northern Cape Provincial Treasury deactivated the appointment functionality in the Province for all Departments due to over expenditures encountered.

The Acting Head of Health Department (HoD) engaged the Acting Head of Provincial Treasury on the matter. The Province have since been given back the appointment function on PERSAL temporarily. The appointments have now been captured on the System and emoluments are due to be paid by 15 March 2021 backdated to January 2021 to the affected doctors.

END.