

**421. The Leader of Opposition (DA) to ask the President of the Republic:**

(1) On what date did he first gain knowledge (a) of the transfer of thousands of mentally ill patients from Life Esidimeni Healthcare to 27 unlicensed non-government organisations (NGOs) and (b) that some of the specified patients had died in the care of these unlicensed NGOs;

(2) Does he intend to establish a Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Esidimeni tragedy; if not, why not; if so, by what date? NW474E

**REPLY:**

1. I was briefed by the Minister of Health on Life Esidimeni on 1 February 2017, which was immediately after the release of the report on the matter by the Health Ombud, Professor Malegapuru Makgoba. Immediately after this briefing, on behalf of the government, I extended our deepest condolences to the families of psychiatric patients who died so tragically in Gauteng.
2. The investigation that was conducted by the Health Ombud was comprehensive and sufficient with regard to assisting government with information to deal with the matters at hand. As such I am not intending to establish a Commission of Inquiry.