**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY   
FOR WRITTEN REPLY   
QUESTION NO. 4539   
DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 25 NOVEMBER 2022 (INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 50)   
  
Ms M D Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**   
  
Whether his department, in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education, has any specified programmes in place to provide spectacles to learners who are visually impaired and who are unable to afford them; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of (a) the number of learners who have been provided with glasses through the specified programmes and (b) how citizens can access the programmes? NW5668E   
 **REPLY:**   
  
The department of Health, in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education provides integrated school health program (ISHP) to learners in schools, to among others prevent barriers to teaching and learning. Some of the service include provision of spectacles to learners who are visually impaired. The service provided through this programme include visual assessment which may result in referral of the learner to the next level of care for possible provision of spectables.   
  
(a) the number of learners who have been provided with glasses through the specified programmes and   
  
The actual number of learners who were provided with spectacles are in provinces and Districts as the programme implementerand are reflected here below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Data Element** | **Apr 2020 to Mar 2021** | **Apr 2021 to Mar 2022** | **Apr 2021 to Sep 2022** | **Totals to date** |
| Eastern Cape | Spectacles issued to child - total | 160 | 362 | 264 | 366 |
| Free State | Spectacles issued to child - total | 33 | 401 | 23 | 142 |
| Gauteng | Spectacles issued to child - total | 1 284 | 3 405 | 2 109 | 3 091 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | Spectacles issued to child - total | 3 374 | 4 620 | 3 466 | 3 912 |
| Limpopo | Spectacles issued to child - total | 329 | 494 | 590 | 732 |
| Mpumalanga | Spectacles issued to child - total | 213 | 659 | 469 | 703 |
| Northern Cape | Spectacles issued to child - total | 28 | 56 | 27 | 36 |
| North West | Spectacles issued to child - total | 21 | 188 | 127 | 218 |
| Western Cape | Spectacles issued to child - total | 384 | 3 511 | 1 702 | 3 184 |
| **South Africa** | **Spectacles issued to child - total** | **5 826** | **13 696** | **8 777** | **12 384** |

(b) The programme is a school health-based intervention, which is tailor-made for the learners only, due to limited number of school health nurses, hence the modality is delivered for specific grades and not all learners in a school. Citizens can still visit their nearest health care facilitities, where they can be screened for vision and referred to Optometrist for further diagnosis and provision of spectacles if indicated. END.