**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY   
FOR WRITTEN REPLY  
 QUESTION NO. 4697   
DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 02 DECEMBER 2022 (INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 51)   
  
Ms M D Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**   
  
In light of the fact that the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has stated that students who have already completed a qualification and are looking to gain a second qualification do not qualify for NSFAS funding, and considering that the SA Medical Association is calling for urgent action to address the scarcity of healthcare workers in public hospitals, especially doctors, as they report that there is currently less than one doctor per a thousand patients, what plans does his department have in place to collaborate with the Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation to provide funding for students who are pursuing their undergraduate degree in the medical field whilst already having an undergraduate degree in a different field? NW5820E   
  
**REPLY:**   
  
The Department of Health provides bursaries that are administered by Provinces for students in the medical field to ensure supply of these professionals for the sector. In addition, funding of undergraduate training in the health sciences is subsidized by the Department of Higher Education through allocations to higher education institutions.   
  
Admission to an undergraduate medical training programme is the prerogative of a medical school where the student has applied. Each provincial Department of Health would then evaluate its ability to support such students. The Minister encourages the provincial Departments of Health to provide funding assistance to undergraduate students in the medical field as much as possible.   
  
END.