# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 566**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 06)**

**Ms X Havard (ANC) to ask the Minister of Health: [126] [Question submitted for oral reply now placed for written reply because it is in excess of quota (Rule 137(8))]:**

With regard to the COVID-19 pandemic that revealed glaring shortages of human resources for health care globally, particularly in the category of nurses, what measures has his department put in place to increase the pool of human resources for health care in the Republic? **NW628E**

**REPLY:**

The shortages of human resources for health are a global phenomenon and South Africa has not been spared from this challenge. The human resources challenge was particularly glaring as the country grappled to manage and contain the Covid-19 pandemic.

The human resource for health shortfall is well recognized by the country’s 2030 Human Resources for Health (HRH) Strategy which makes a strong case for significant additional investment in the health workforce to improve health services access, quality, and equity.

In increasing the pool, the HRH Strategy provides some insights into the additional numbers of health workers needed Hence a case is also made for aligning health workforce education and training with the health system’s needs.

Specific to a pool of nurses, a baseline audit to quantify gaps between existing supply and existing needs for all categories of nurses including nurse specialists has been concluded. This will guide areas of training required to increase the pool.

In order to enhance services in the overstretched public health sector, particularly with regard to South Africa’s response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the department appreciated the introduction of the Covid-19 Grant and was able to inject an additional 6 688 health care workers (that included 3 460 nurses and 409 doctors) into the System on a contract basis

A further 7 583 (with 2 605 Nurses and 2060 Doctors) health professionals were allocated to do community service in health facilities to commence duty from 1 January 2023.

END.