# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 614**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 12)**

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

Whether he and/or his department has considered offers from foreign-trained medical professionals who are willing to offer their assistance to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic; if not, why not; if so, what are the full relevant details?

###### NW813E

**REPLY:**

Yes. It is imperative to ensure that as the Country is responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, there are sufficient skilled health professionals to attend to the patient continuum from screening services to hospitalisation. In accordance with the South African Regulations, consideration is first given to South African Citizen health professionals that are available and if numbers are insufficient, foreign nationals are considered in a systematic order.

First is through Government-to-Government Agreements looking at required skills from foreign nationals. In this process the Health Professional Council of South Africa (HPCSA) is engaged to check the quality of training and skills of these foreign nationals.

In the same spirit, individual foreign nationals who wish to practice their medical trade in South Africa are given an opportunity in accordance with the Immigration Act on condition that they fulfil all the requirements as outlined by the HPCSA.

South Africa has since approached China, Cuba and Russia through existing Government-to-Government agreements for assistance.

To date the Republic of Cuba has availed 187 Medical Specialists (i.e. Biostatistics, Epidemiologists, Family Physicians, Health Technologists) where the Country is unable to produce enough, who will be assisting in the response to Covid-19.

In all other cases, foreign health professionals who wish to assist during Covid-19, such health professionals must first meet the HPCSA requirements to be considered.

END.