# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 767**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 14)**

**Ms H Ismail (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) How often are health care professional staff tested, given that they are front line staff dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic;

(2) whether a health care professional may refuse to test a person who wants to be tested; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

###### NW969E

**REPLY:**

1. The health professional staff are not tested routinely except if they have symptoms of Covid-19 or fulfil the criteria of a high-risk exposure with a person who tested positive with Covid-19. They may after seven days of self-isolation be clinically evaluated and tested on day 8 with the possibility of early return to work if they have a negative test and are clinically well. They will continue to be monitored for symptoms till day 14 and are counselled on personal hygiene measures. Health professional staff are monitored daily through symptom screening.

The rationale is that there are not enough test kits and targeted testing is needed. Risk assessments in health care settings, use of public health measures, personal hygiene, training on Covid-19 and personal protective equipment all contribute to a lowered risk of transmission exposure.

1. The health care professional cannot refuse to clinically evaluate and test the person based on the national Department of Health guideline of prioritized testing for patients in hospitals with respiratory conditions as well as health care workers.

END.