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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 841**

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**841. Dr M M Gondwe (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) What total number of doctors in the SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) are contracted to serve in the (a) George area and (b) entire Garden Route District;

(2) (a) how often do the specified SASSA contracted doctors pay visits to the specified areas and (b) what total number of persons are the SASSA contracted doctors expected to serve in the areas;

(3) what is the average waiting period for patients to be able to be attended by the SASSA contracted doctors? NW874E

**REPLY:**

1. (a) and (b)

SASSA Western Cape (WC) has an Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Consolidated Health Districts- Garden Route and Central Karoo, but it only provides for Health Practitioner initiated assessments, access to records and use of Health facilities.

SASSA WC therefore must employ its own doctors where assessments initiate from the SASSA local offices. These contracted doctors must service the Garden Route and other parts of the Central Karoo. During the current financial year, SASSA WC contracted 4 doctors to the following Garden Route areas:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Service Area** | **No. of Servicing Dr/s** |
| 1. George | **1** |
| 1. Pacaltsdorp | **1** |
| 1. Mossel Bay | **1** |
| 1. Plettenberg Bay/ Knysna | **1** |

1. (a) The 2 contracted doctors in George and Pacaltsdorp visit and complete assessments once a week while the 2 contracted doctors visit and complete asessments in Mosselbay and Knysna/ Plettenberg Bay once a month.

(b) The SLA with the contracted doctors are aligned to the Disability Management Policy permitting each doctor to complete 40 physical assessments per day

1. The Norms and standards applied by the SASSA stipulate that an assessment should be completed within 30 days of booking a client. Any assessment to be completed beyond 30 days is considered a backlog. Currently, there are backlogs in the following areas:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Area** | **Backlogs** | **Number of Days** |
| 1. George | **95** | **>30days** |
| 1. Pacaltsdorp | **70** | **>30days** |
| 1. Mossel Bay | **305** | **>60 days** |

The Region has gone out on tender for the appointment of contracted doctors and could only secure the services of seven doctors to perform assessments. Four of the contracted doctors have been allocated to the Garden route areas as indicated above. Approval has been received from the Regional Executive Manager for the direct sourcing of additional doctors to address the need and to deal with backlog cases.

Furthermore, approval was also provided in line with applicable legislation, for paper based assessments to be conducted. This approval will allow the doctors to complete assessments to a maximum of 60 per day