# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 995**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 10)**

**Ms C N Mkhonto (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

In light of the ongoing strike by members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers’ Union, (a) which measures of intervention have been put in place to mitigate the absence of health workers from their service points and (b) what is the total number of patients who have died as a result of the strike?  **NW1121E**

**REPLY:**

1. The intervention measures are coordinated at local facility level, supported by the District and Provincial administration. During the NEHAWU led strike, the clinical leadership at each facility put in place mechanisms to reduce the impact, including some staff volunteering to work longer hours, some staff performing duties not normally allocated to them e.g. feeding of patients, cleaning the wards. This included a real-time system of diverting emergencies to health facilities that were not or were less severely affected by the strike activities.

The intervention measures also included the National Department of Health led by the Minister, Provincial Departments of Health led by the MEC’s and senior officials in providing support at facility level. The National Health Council also ensure that a coordinated strategy is developed and implemented to support local facility management including monitoring and managing the strike. In selected instances, assistance was sought and received from South African Military Health Services for the most hard hit hospitals.

1. So far, only six (6) deaths are alleged to be attributed to the strike. However, these are subject to ongoing investigation.

END.