



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

421. The Leader of Opposition (DA) to ask the President of the Republic:

- (1) On what date did he first gain knowledge (a) of the transfer of thousands of mentally ill patients from Life Esidimeni Healthcare to 27 unlicensed non-government organisations (NGOs) and (b) that some of the specified patients had died in the care of these unlicensed NGOs;
- (2) Does he intend to establish a Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Esidimeni tragedy; if not, why not; if so, by what date?

NW474E

REPLY:

- (1) I was briefed by the Minister of Health on Life Esidimeni on 1 February 2017, which was immediately after the release of the report on the matter by the Health Ombud, Professor Malegapuru Makgoba. Immediately after this briefing, on behalf of the government, I extended our deepest condolences to the families of psychiatric patients who died so tragically in Gauteng.
- (2) The investigation that was conducted by the Health Ombud was comprehensive and sufficient with regard to assisting government with information to deal with the matters at hand. As such I am not intending to establish a Commission of Inquiry.