

Friday, 12 March 2021]

No 3 - 2021] SECOND SESSION, SIXTH LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATURE OF THE PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER

Note:

1. Questions for oral reply will be printed in full in the Question Paper for the day for which they have been set down for reply.
2. *Indicates a question for oral reply.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

FRIDAY, 12 MARCH 2021

***20. Ms J Cowley to ask the MEC responsible for Health:**

Noting that at Livingstone Tertiary Hospital in the Nelson Mandela Bay District, critical shortages of healthcare workers is reportedly impacting very negatively on the ability of the hospital to function as a tertiary hospital and further noting that after the closure of the hospital due to cleanliness challenges in June 2020, the then Head of Department allegedly committed to providing the hospital with 110 further general assistant posts:

- (1) Whether she can kindly provide, per unit in the hospital, the number of (a) filled posts and (b) vacant posts for the following categories of employees; (i) specialists, (ii) medical officers, (iii) nurses (all categories), (iv) general assistants and (v) porters;

RESPONSE

The status of filled and vacant posts at Livingstone Hospital is as follows:

Category	Total Posts	Filled	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
Head Clinical Department	6	5	1	16,7%

Head Clinical Unit	41	23	18	43,9%
Medical Specialists	58	30	28	48,3%
Total	105	58	47	44,8%

Medical Officers	141	138	3	2,1%
Medical Interns	160	143	17	10,6%
Total	301	281	20	6,6%

Prof Nurse General	359	342	17	4,7%
Prof Nurse Speciality	208	160	48	23,1%
Total	567	502	65	11,5%

Staff Nurse	179	177	2	1,1%
Nursing Assistant	260	256	4	1,5%
Total	439	433	6	1,4%

Cleaners	214	169	45	21,0%
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Porters	102	90	12	11,8%
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- (2) whether she can kindly provide a timeline as to when the vacant posts at the Livingstone Hospital will be filled; if not, why;

RESPONSE

Filling of posts is an ongoing process. The hospital continues to replace incumbents as they leave the hospital due to attrition and other factors and it continues to reprioritise the available replacement budget to fund unfunded priorities. The replacement of posts is overseen by Head Office to give guidance and ensure fair and equitable distribution of the available resources to meet service delivery needs.

- (3) whether the extra general assistant posts that the previous Head of Department allegedly committed to providing the hospital were ever forthcoming; if not, why;

RESPONSE

Livingstone Hospital was granted approval for an additional 100 General Assistant (GA) posts and all those posts were filled in 2020. It must be mentioned that those that leave, they are being replaced.

- (4) if specialist posts are not filled, whether the hospital is under threat of losing its accreditation as a tertiary hospital with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA); if so, what immediate steps is her Department taking with a view to avoiding losing its accreditation;

RESPONSE

The current specialist vacancy rate does not pose a threat to the re-accreditation of the training platform as the main training domains (i.e. surgery, orthopaedics, internal medicine, obstetrics and maternal and child) have a much lower vacancy rates at an average of 20%. The higher vacancy rates are found in super specialist areas like Neurosurgery.

The filling of these specialist posts is an ongoing process and funding is available from the National Tertiary Services Grant and the Health Professionals Training and Development Grant. Furthermore, the filling of specialist posts is a function of a regional collaboration between the two feeder districts and the 2 training facilities namely Dora and Livingstone Hospitals. As such, the current recruitment cycle is prioritising appointment of general specialists in selected district hospital such as Uitenhage Provincial Hospital in order to strengthen the referral system. This approach is also in support of the Nelson Mandela Fidel Castro Internship programme.

- (5) what is the status of the (a) goods and services, (b) compensation of employment (CoE) and (c) medical equipment budgets for the hospital for the 2021/22 financial year as at the latest specified date for which information is available?

RESPONSE

The budget for the 2021/22 year for Livingstone Hospital is as follows:

- Compensation of Employees R939 125 million
- Goods and Services R335 585 million
- Transfers and Subsidies R 35 568 million
- Payment for Capital Assets R 10 000 million (inclusive of equipment)