

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 1727

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 10)

Mrs M O Clarke (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:

- (1) With reference to his announcement on 11 March 2026 about the precautionary suspensions of senior officials in his department (names and details furnished), what (a) are the details of the respective cases for which the specified persons were suspended and (b) steps has he taken to (i) institute internal disciplinary proceedings against each official and (ii) root out corruption in his department and/or the broader health sector;
- (2) whether each specified person has been suspended with pay; if not, what is the position in each case; if so, (a) what are the reasons and (b) what is the annual salary of each specified official?

NW1936E

REPLY:

- (1) With reference to precautionary suspensions of senior officials in the National Department of Health which were announced on 11 March 2026:
 - (a) The detail of the respective cases is that all three of the specified persons were suspended following their arrest for the same case of alleged fraud and theft of public funds. This relates to an allegation of the use of Global Fund money that, according to the charges, did not follow authorised public procurement procedures.
 - (b) Regarding steps that have been taken:
 - (i) Internal disciplinary proceedings against each of the three officials has commenced with their precautionary suspension according to the required prescripts of the Public Service.

Directors General are appointed and disciplined by the President so the procedures followed will be slightly different.

For the other two senior officials a chair of the Disciplinary Committee is appointed who must be neutral and of a higher grade or an external expert. Since the officials are in the rank of Deputy Director General the Minister is in the process of appointing appropriate chair/s.

In this case this requires close collaboration with the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), also known as the Hawks.
 - (ii) Rooting out corruption is a multi-faceted challenge because it is so engrained in society. The actions being pursued include:
 - in the National Department of Health, the Acting Director General has been instructed to:
 - tighten all procurement procedures and transport and accommodation arrangements

- work closely with the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) to deal with known and suspected shortcomings
- fill key vacant posts in Internal Audit plus Risk and Ethics management
- continue to work with the Auditor General on identifying and resolving management issues in the department
- In the provincial Departments of Health there is a coordinated process of addressing a range of governance shortcomings including:
 - creation of small costs centres with clearly allocated budgets and identified clinical and administrative management
 - formalisation of 'functional business units' where the procurement and human resources plans are managed by the officials directly responsible and not centralised to district or provincial levels
 - implementation of clear written delegations to managers at all levels
 - review of governance structures such as clinic committees and hospital boards
- in the broader health sector, there are many challenges and some significant risks:
 - medical scheme fraud by members (and their beneficiaries), providers and others the schemes, with the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS), are tasked to manage
 - procurement and logistics fraud and corruption are managed through reporting to the Competition Commission of South Africa, the SA Police, health professional councils and through blacklisting by Treasury if appropriate.

(2) (a) All three specified persons have been suspended with pay because this is the required procedure in terms of the law.

(b) The annual salary of each specified officials is in the Public Service range for their position:

● Director General (L16)	R 2 650 233.00
● Deputy Director General (L15)	R 2 135 835
● Chief Finance Officer (L15)	R 1 813 182

END.