

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 3740

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 24)

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

- (1) What are the (a) age demographics of all doctors employed in the public health sector and (b) fields of specialisation as a percentage of each category of all doctors employed in the public health sector in each province;
- (2) what is the (a) current vacancy rate for all the specified nursing specialties in each province and (b) time frame that has been put in place to fill the vacant positions?

NW3939E

REPLY:

- (1) (a) The age demographics of all doctors employed in the public health sector, as recorded on the PERSAL system as at 30 May 2026, are presented in Table 1 below:

Age demographics of all doctors employed in the public health sector		
Age Group	Grand Total	%
Below 30yr	6651	29.69%
30-34yr	6736	30.06%
35-39yr	3212	14.34%
40-44yr	1922	8.58%
45-49yr	1464	6.53%
50-54yr	1101	4.91%
55-59yr	705	3.15%
60-64yr	479	2.14%
65 and above	135	0.60%
Grand Total	22405	

- (b) Table 2 provides the distribution of medical specialists as a percentage of the total number of doctors employed in the public health sector, disaggregated by province. It should be noted that the PERSAL system does not currently permit the extraction of workforce data by individual medical specialty or field of specialization. Consequently, it is not possible to provide the requested breakdown by fields of specialization within each category of doctors.

TABLE 2: Percentage distribution of medical specialists by field and province				
	Sub-Speciality Grade 1-3	Medical Specialist Grade 1-3	Registrar (Medical)	Senior Registrar (Medical)
Eastern Cape	0.69%	5.59%	3.73%	0.00%
Free State	4.86%	4.63%	5.90%	0.00%
Gauteng	6.25%	32.31%	47.22%	20.37%
KwaZulu Natal	2.08%	21.55%	12.02%	0.00%
Limpopo Province	4.86%	4.09%	5.00%	0.00%
Mpumalanga	0.69%	2.54%	0.04%	0.00%
North-West	4.86%	4.21%	2.28%	0.00%
Northern Cape	0.00%	0.83%	0.04%	0.00%
Western Cape	75.69%	24.26%	23.78%	79.63%

- (2) (a) As indicated in response 1(b) above, the PERSAL system does not currently permit the extraction of workforce data by individual nursing specialty or field of specialization. Consequently, it is not possible to provide the current vacancy rate for each specified nursing specialty by province. Table 3 below, therefore, reflects the current vacancy rate

TABLE 3: Nursing specialist posts - PERSAL data as at May 2026	
Province	% Vacancy rate
Eastern Cape	31.82%
Free State	42.83%
Gauteng	18.98%
KwaZulu Natal	26.30%
Limpopo Province	18.51%
Mpumalanga	7.26%
North-West	30.67%
Northern Cape	38.79%
Western Cape	18.16%
Grand Total	24.20%

ring posts in the public health sector, disaggregated by province.

- (b) Provinces are continuously filling funded vacant posts, subject to the availability of financial resources, approved organisational structures, and the completion of prescribed recruitment and selection processes.

Accordingly, there is no uniform national timeframe for filling vacant nursing speciality posts. Provincial Departments endeavor to fill critical and funded vacancies as expeditiously as possible, considering:

- the availability of suitably qualified candidates.
- applicable recruitment and selection processes.
- budgetary constraints; and
- service delivery priorities.

The National Department of Health continues to engage provinces to monitor vacancy trends and support initiatives aimed at strengthening the health workforce (including nursing), particularly in critical and scarce speciality areas.

END.