

Department of Health : Budget Vote

UCDP : Hon MN Matladi

Tuesday, 31 May 2011

E249 : 11:00 AM

I'd like to start off by acknowledging and congratulating the Ministry for the unqualified audit report which is said to be the first in seven years. This is not a usual occurrence in our government and therefore deserves acknowledgement. We hope others in the executive will heed the good example and follow suit.

This is now the second year since the announcement of the establishment of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on NHI and I would like more details as to the progress made, it is not enough to say that they have been hard at work, but doing what? When are public consultations scheduled and why is this process moving at a snail's pace?

The report states that a significant number of deaths of children under five were due to severe malnutrition and diarrhoeal diseases. Are there any programmes that the Health Department runs with Social Development in addressing this and if not, why not? How are the Department's key priorities linked to Millennium Development Goals? Are they in sync? In the past years we've often read of South Africa as having a high rate in maternal and infant mortality, does the Department have a specific programme or project aimed at curbing this?

In order to address the Human Resources impediment in the sector, what is the Departments doing in attracting high school students to take up careers in the health sector as careers of choice? Further, are there any strategies aimed at retaining health professional in the public sector?

Why has the distribution or uptake of the female condom gone down? Is there any investment aimed at improving the female condom to be more user-friendly and promoting it as a choice to take up in prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STI's?

Has the moratorium on appointment of personnel been uplifted, how long was it supposed to last and did it include qualified health professionals? What prompted this decision when HR constraints have been key in delivering quality health care?