

Surveillance of Notifiable Medical Conditions (NMCs) in South Africa

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Did you know that failure by a nurse or doctor to report a Notifiable Medical Condition (NMC) is a criminal offence?

According to the National Health Act, 2003 (Act no.61 of 2003) and the current Regulations on Control of Communicable Diseases, every nurse and every doctor has a mandate to report all diagnosed cases of medical conditions that are stipulated as notifiable. Failure to do so is a criminal offense.

What is the current state of the national notification system?

The current system of reporting of Notifiable Medical Conditions is being re-engineered by the National Institute for Communicable Disease with the National Department of Health. Measures are being put in place to ensure that we have a real-time functional system for efficient reporting of NMC in order to mount an appropriate, timeous public health response.

To date there have been a number of actions taken that include but are not limited to

- Revision of the current NMC Regulations, it is anticipated that these regulations will be promulgated in 2017.
- Assessment of the current notification processes and channels, to identify limitations and learn from best practice.
- Based on the findings of the national assessment, development of new notification systems and processes and strengthening of reporting and feedback structures
- Development of a real-time electronic web based and mobile platform/APP for rapid notification of NMC
- Enhancement of laboratory and private sector based reporting of NMCs

- Continued awareness campaigns for the need to notify, what conditions are notifiable, and how to notify

When will the new notification system be implemented?

The new paper based reporting system was launched on the 19th of June and is currently being rolled-out to all private and public health facilities across South Africa. Once you have received the new NMC Case Notification Form and the accompanying SOP, you can use the new documents and report as stipulated in the SOP. This form immediately replaces the GW17/5 form and the reporting channels documented in the SOP replaces the current reporting channels.

Additionally, we are in the final phases of final phases of developing the electronic real-time reporting system in the form of a web and mobile based APP and we hope to deploy the electronic platform by August 2017 to enable real-time Health Facility based reporting and feedback.

As a health care practitioner (nurse or doctor) what am I expected to do?

Before the roll-out of the electronic reporting platform – from now (19 June 2017) onwards

Whenever you diagnose any one of the NMCs, complete a NMC Case Notification Form available within your health care facility and submit it to the relevant responsible people as documented in the SOP for NMC paper based reporting. In summary, submit the completed NMC Case Notification Form to the NMC focal person within your health facility and send a copy via email to NMCsurveillanceReport@nicd.ac.za or fax to [086 639 1638](tel:0866391638). Ensure that the form reaches the

focal person at your district or sub-district Communicable Diseases Control (CDC) office.

After the roll-out of the new electronic reporting system

As the new system is being rolled-out, comprehensive training will be conducted for all system users to ensure

comprehension of and compliance with the new system. These training sessions will provide complete details on

how to report NMCs electronically.

For more information:

Email: NMCsurveillanceReport@nicd.ac.za or call the NMC national surveillance hotline: [072 621 3805](tel:0726213805)