

Target Audience

The target audience are district public health workers on the front lines of surveillance data collection, monitoring, analysis, and response. This includes medical officers, nurses, infection control officers, surveillance officers, and environmental health officers.

Public health workers from the provincial and national levels are also welcome to participate, particularly to gain better understanding of the sources, strengths, and weaknesses of the data from the field, and to foster better communication among all levels of the Department of Health.

Benefits to the Department of Health

The Department of Health can expect tangible results that benefit their goals, including:

- Increased capacity among staff to recognize public health problems in the population
- Increased quality of surveillance data and analysis at district and provincial levels
- Increased capacity among staff to conduct a descriptive analysis of a public health problem
- Stronger culture of data-driven decision making
- A network of well-trained surveillance officers in the country.

How to apply

This course is normally conducted at the request of the Provincial and District Departments of Health. Interested institutions should contact SAFETP for more information about the requirements.

Contact details

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Frontline Epidemiology Training



Promoting applied epidemiology for evidence-based decision making



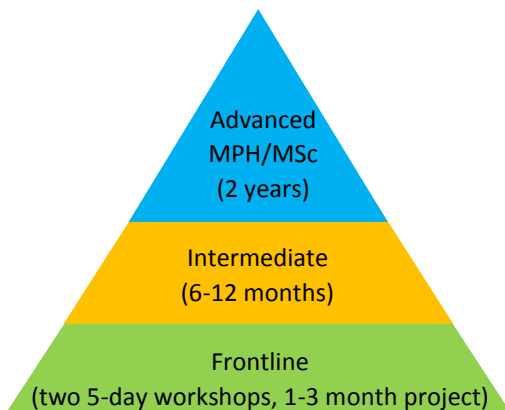
Background

The South African Field Epidemiology Training Programme (SAFETP) and Frontline courses were launched in 2006 to provide a platform for building field epidemiology capacity for health professionals.

The Frontline course is an in-service program focused on detecting and responding to diseases and events of public health importance or international concern. Two 5-day workshops are separated by an on-the-job project for 1-3 months.

Participants learn and practice the fundamental skills used in frontline surveillance including use of case definitions, disease detection and reporting, summarizing of data using simple tables and graphs, case investigation, outbreak investigation and response, data analysis and interpretation for decision making.

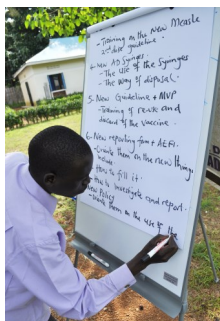
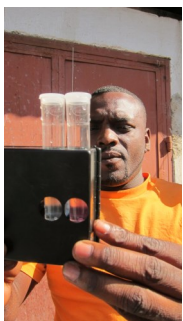
This training is the first step in the three-tiered model of training to improve the skills of public health workers at each level of the health system.



What is Epidemiology?

The study of the distribution (e.g. patterns by time, person, and place) and determinants (e.g. causes, risk factors) of health-related states or events in specified human populations and its application to the control of health problems.

Field Epidemiology is the practice of epidemiology in the field—in the community—commonly in public health service.



Programme Structure

Workshop 1 (5 days)

This workshop consists of presentations and in-class exercises covering the following topics:

- Surveillance
- Collection, analysis and interpretation of surveillance data
- Data quality assessment
- Outbreak investigation and response
- Report writing
- Oral presentation skills

On-the-job projects (1-3 months)

Participants return to their jobs where they conduct field projects to practice, implement, and reinforce what they have learned.

Any two of the following projects need to be completed:

- Conduct a case investigation and write a report
- Participate in an outbreak investigation and write a report
- Create an expanded surveillance summary report with tables and charts
- Conduct monitoring, evaluation and feedback visits at some of the reporting sites
- Analyze a surveillance data quality problem and recommend improvements.

Workshop 2 (5 days)

Participants reconvene for final presentations and discussions. They also present results of projects that were conducted during the field activity period.

Participants who successfully complete the program receive a certificate of completion signed by NICD/SAFETP officials. They may also be favorably disposed to enter the Intermediate or Advanced course.

