

INTERNATIONAL OUTBREAKS OF IMPORTANCE

A description of COVID-19 clusters in Nelson Mandela Bay District, Eastern Cape Province

As of 20 May 2020, the Eastern Cape Province had 2 215 COVID-19 cases, with 45 deaths and 1 036 recoveries. Nelson Mandela Bay District (NMBD) accounted for 36% (n=803) of the cases, 37% (n=17) of the deaths and 46% (n=479) of the recoveries.

NMBD is one of the two metropolises in the province that has six other district municipalities. It is located on the shores of Algoa Bay and comprises the city of Port Elizabeth, the nearby towns of Uitenhage and Despatch, and the surrounding rural area. According to the 2007 census, NMBD had an estimated population of 1 050 930 with a median age of 26 years, and the average household size was reported to be four people per household.

The Metropolis recorded its first case of COVID-19 by date of sample collection on 16 March 2020; the patient had

a recent international travel history to COVID-19 high-risk countries. Since then, over seven clusters with 10 or more cases have been identified to date. These include clusters associated with funerals, retail stores, long-term care facilities, healthcare facilities and other workplaces (Figure 2).

The first cluster with 45 cases was confirmed between 30 March 2020 and 23 April 2020. This cluster was linked to a funeral of a healthcare worker (nurse) which occurred on 21 March 2020 at KwaDwesi, Port Elizabeth. The cases in this cluster either attended or had contact with someone who attended the funeral; over 1 000 people reportedly attended the funeral. Two more clusters (Funeral-B and Grocery store-A) could be positively linked to this cluster. As of 20 May 2020, 21% (172/803) of all cases in NMBD had been linked to specific clusters.

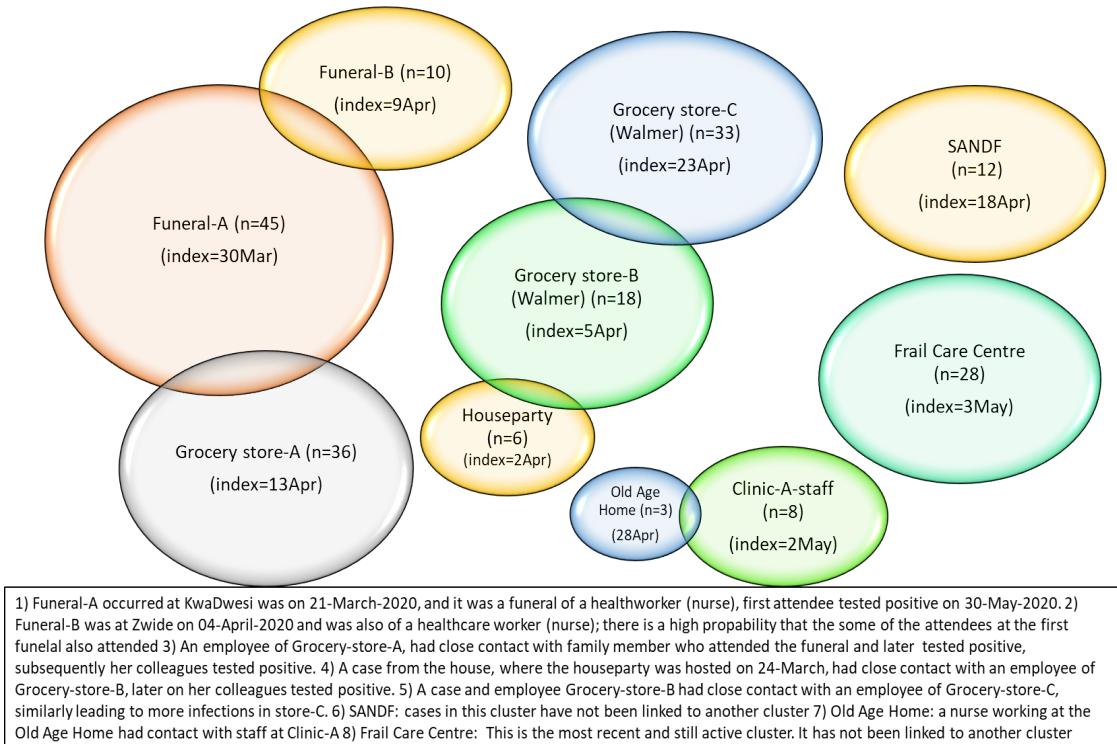


Figure 2. Some of the important COVID-19 clusters identified within Nelson Mandela Bay District as at 20 May 2020 (index=date is date of specimen collection of index case, Apr=April, Mar=March).

Article source: Nelson Mandela Bay District Health (NMBDH), NMBDH contact tracing team, Eastern Cape Provincial Health, National Institute for Communicable Diseases COVID-19 response team; NICD-NHLS; cherylc@nicd.ac.za