



Standard Operating Procedures:

Reporting COVID-19 to the Notifiable Medical Conditions Surveillance System using the Electronic Application or Paper Case Notification Form

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1. INTRODUCTION

The first case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was reported on 31 December 2019 by the World Health Organization (WHO), following a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has since been confirmed as the causative virus for COVID-19. On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 as a global pandemic.

According to the International Health Regulations, 2005 (IHR) and the National Health Act, 61 of 2003 in South Africa, Notifiable Medical Conditions (NMCs) are of public health importance and potentially pose significant public health risks both nationally and internationally; they require rapid detection, prompt risk assessment, timely notification, verification and public health response. COVID-19 is a category 1 Notifiable Medical Condition (NMC), therefore, notification should be made immediately upon diagnosis, to the district and provincial health authorities.

Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to outline the process of reporting COVID-19 using the NMC electronic Application or paper based reporting tools, in order to facilitate rapid communication and targeted public health response.

Scope

This SOP details COVID-19 notification process and describes the procedures for completing an electronic or enhanced paper based case notification form, and explains how a notified case can be edited/updated on the Notifiable Medical Condition Surveillance System (NMCCS).

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Public and private health facility level

According to the [regulations](#), ANY healthcare provider (doctor or nurse) who makes a diagnosis of COVID-19 must immediately report the patient to the district communicable disease co-ordinator (CDC), using one of the NMC platforms.

District level

The District CDC report all cases that test positive for COVID-19 to the District Outbreak Response Team, to facilitate implementation of public health responses (including contact tracing). The District CDC also ensures upward reporting of cases to the Provincial CDC.

Provincial level

The Provincial CDC provide public health guidance and support as required, ensure reporting of cases to the Provincial Outbreak Response Team, as well as upward reporting of the cases to National level.

3. PROCEDURES

Case Notification

Which patient must be notified?

- The healthcare worker should immediately notify all probable and confirmed cases of COVID-19 using the NMC electronic Application (web or mobile) or the enhanced COVID-19 NMC case notification form. The case notification form and other COVID-19 guidelines can be accessed from the National Institute of Communicable Disease (NICD) website. [Click here](#) for the latest case definition.

Probable case: Persons with acute respiratory illness with sudden onset of at least one of the following: cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or fever [$\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (measured) or history of fever (subjective)] irrespective of admission status.
AND

for whom testing for SARS-CoV-2 is inconclusive (the result of the test reported by the laboratory) or who tested positive on a pan-coronavirus assay.

Confirmed case: A person with laboratory confirmation of SARS-CoV-2 infections (using a PCR-based assay), irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.

How to notify?

1. NMC electronic App

- The healthcare worker who diagnoses COVID-19 must immediately notify the case on the NMC electronic Application (mobile or web).

Accessing the NMC electronic App

- If you do not have the NMC electronic Application (App) installed on your device, you can access the [NMC web portal](#) or download the [mobile App](#) from NICD website (under the Notifiable Medical Conditions tab). You can also install the NMC mobile App from the Google Play store, for Android devices.
- If it is your first time to use the electronic NMC platform you must create your user profile on the NMC registration page, and be authorized before using the application. A user

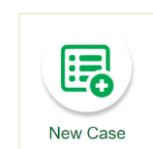
registration SOP for mobile or web is available on the NICD website. Click here: [NMC Registration page](#).

Accessing and using the COVID-19 module

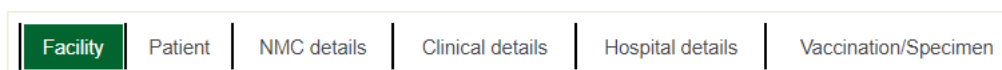
- To access the COVID-19 module click the "COVID-19" icon located on the main NMC App landing page.



- To *capture* a new case of COVID-19 click the on the "New Case" icon located on the home screen of the COVID-19 module. (*nb: Before capturing a case, please search the inbox to see if the case already exists in the NMC database.*)

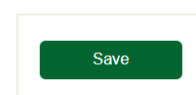


- You will see the following six 'tabs' on the "New Case" screen: Facility, Patient details, NMC details, Clinical details, Hospitals details, Vaccination/Specimen details

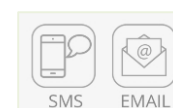


- Go through each 'tab' and complete all the necessary fields. (*n.b. mandatory fields, marked with a red asterisk* should be completed for every case*)

- Click the 'save' button, under the last tab, when you have captured all the details



- You will receive an sms and/or an email acknowledging receipt of the case notification. Sms and e-mail alerts will also be sent out to relevant focal people at the health facility, sub-district, district, province and national levels.



2. Paper based: Enhanced COVID-19 NMC case notification form

- In the event that the healthcare worker is unable to access the NMC electronic App, an enhanced COVID-19 NMC case notification paper form can be used to notify a case. The [COVID-19 form](#) is available on NICD website ([Click here](#)).
- The COVID-19 NMC case notification form must be thoroughly completed. ([Click here](#))

- Send the completed form by email: NMCsurveillanceReport@nicd.ac.za or fax: 086 639 1638 or to the NMC hotline 072 621 3805.

Editing a laboratory case notification

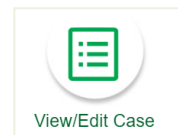
- COVID-19 positive results from public and private laboratories feed directly into the NMC database on a daily basis. These laboratory notifications are accessible through the 'inbox' of the COVID-19 module, on the NMC web portal or mobile App.
- A healthcare worker can use the "View/Edit Case" icon to search for the laboratory notification of the patient, and then edit the case notification by adding the additional clinical details. This serves you some time, as some of the patient details are already pre-populated.

Follow these steps to edit a laboratory case notification:

- Enter the COVID-19 module by clicking on the "COVID-19" icon located on the main NMC App landing page.



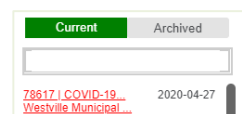
- Click on the "View/Edit Case" icon located on the home screen of the COVID-19 module.



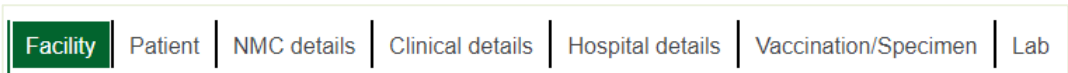
- Search for the case to view (either by scrolling or using the search box) on the left hand side of the screen.

Note:

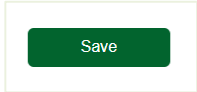
- *The Current tab shows cases that are not older than 15 days.*
- *The Archive tab shows cases that are older than 15 days.*



- Click on the appropriate case to open that specific case. This opens up a page with a summary of the case.
- Then click on "Edit Details" in the Tab List in the right window.
- You will see the following 'tabs' on the "Edit Case" screen: Facility, Patient details, NMC details, Clinical details, Hospitals details, Vaccination/Specimen details, Lab



- Go through each 'tab' and complete all the missing fields. (n.b. *mandatory fields, marked with a red asterisk** should be completed for every case)
- Click the 'save' button, under the last tab, when you have captured all the details



Updating patient status

- After submitting a COVID-19 case notification, the healthcare worker must update the patient's outcome details when these details become available.
- To update the patient details, the healthcare worker should use the 'View/Edit Case' function, as described above.
- The following sections on the form should be updated if the patient's status changes following notification:
 - *Hospitalization*: exit date from high care/ICU
 - *Oxygen requirement during hospitalization*: end dates when the patient did not require ventilation.
 - *Hospital outcome*: Discharged date or date of death in the event of death
 - *Outpatient Outcome*: Status of the patients who is cared for at home after 14 days of symptoms onset/test date

Annexure A: Case definition ([Case Definition Category 1](#))

Annexure B: COVID-19 NMC case notification form ([Click here](#))

Annexure C: **NMC Surveillance System:(Web and Android App** ([NMC Registration page](#))