**Category 1: Immediate reporting telephonically followed by written or electronic notification within 24hrs of diagnosing a case**

**RESPIRATORY DISEASE CAUSED BY A NOVEL RESPIRATORY PATHOGEN**

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| **Why is surveillance necessary?** | **Who must notify and when?** | **Suspected case definition** | **Probable case definition** | **Confirmed case definition** |
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| Previously unrecognised/ undetected pathogens may be responsible for outbreaks of disease in humans. Novel respiratory pathogens emerge occasionally, and cause outbreaks. Examples of this are the SARS outbreak that occurred in 2003 in South East Asia, and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) outbreak currently ongoing in the Middle East and SARS-CoV-2 first identified in China in 2019. These pathogens may first be identified as a cluster of people with severe respiratory illness. This category of disease is notifiable in the unusual event of an outbreak of a previously unrecognised/undetected pathogen, or the importation of a pathogen not currently included in the NMC regulations. | The healthcare practitioner responsible for the patient or who has noted a cluster of cases of respiratory illness should notify authorities. Notification should be made immediately on identification of the cluster, or on receipt of a laboratory diagnosis of the novel respiratory pathogen.  | A person meeting the case definition for a suspected case of a specific emerging respiratory pathogen e.g., MERS-CoV (see NICD website for specific updated case definitions for emerging pathogens)\* **OR**A cluster (e.g. 3 or more cases in 72 hours, or 5 or more cases in a 5-day period) of people with severe respiratory illness (hospitalised or warranting hospitalisation or ICU admission or death) with evidence of common exposure or epidemiologic link. Attention should be given to recent travel or exposure to animals implicated in zoonotic transmission of respiratory pathogens. | A person meeting the case definition for a probable case of a specific emerging respiratory pathogen e.g. MERS-CoV (see NICD website for specific updated case definitions for emerging pathogens); **OR** Person/s (single or from a cluster) satisfying the suspected case definition, with absent or inconclusive laboratory result for a novel or emerging pathogen; **AND** A close contact of a laboratory-confirmed case. | A person with laboratory confirmation of a novel (new), emerging pathogen (not previously detected in South Africa) e.g., MERS-CoV or avian influenza A subtypes (e.g. H5N1, H7N9). |
| **Additional notes** In the event of an outbreak of a novel respiratory pathogen, the NICD will make and confirm the initial diagnosis, and will issue case definitions and laboratory criteria for diagnosis. Influenza H1N1pdm09 (known in the public media as ‘swine flu’) is NOT a novel respiratory pathogen, and is NOT notifiable |
| **\*Additional resources**Additional resources for MERS-CoV, including a FAQ, specimen collection instructions and guidelines may be found at http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/middle-east-respiratory-syndrome-coronavirus/  |