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Reference:

MEASLES WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT FOR SOUTH AFRICA
Report for week ending 22 August 2025, epidemiological week 34
Compiled by the Centre for Vaccines and Immunology,
National Institute for Communicable Diseases

Background and Methods

The NICD is a member of the WHO Global Measles Reference Laboratory Network and provides quality-assured measles serology and PCR testing on samples submitted from public and private sector hospitals. Clinicians are requested to submit a blood sample together with a throat swab or urine sample, together with a completed case investigation form, to the NICD from all patients presenting with fever, macular-papular rash and one of the three c's (cough, coryza and conjunctivitis). The case definition and case investigation form may be found on the NICD website at https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/measles/. Clinical and wastewater surveillance results for measles may be found on the measles-rubella dashboard at https://www.nicd.ac.za/measles-rubella-dashboard/

Summarised surveillance findings

From week 1 to week 34 of 2025, national measles surveillance has detected an increase in the measles cases (Figure 1). As of 22 August 2025, a total of 741 laboratory-confirmed cases were reported, 503 cases in Gauteng province, 110 in the Free State province, and 35 in Mpumalanga province. Since our last update in epidemiological week 33, 22 new cases recorded were in Gauteng, 7 in Free State, 10 in Limpopo, 1 in Western Cape, and 4 in Mpumalanga Province. The reported measles infections were mainly in children aged 1-14 years, with an increase seen in persons 15 years and older in Gauteng province (Table 1).

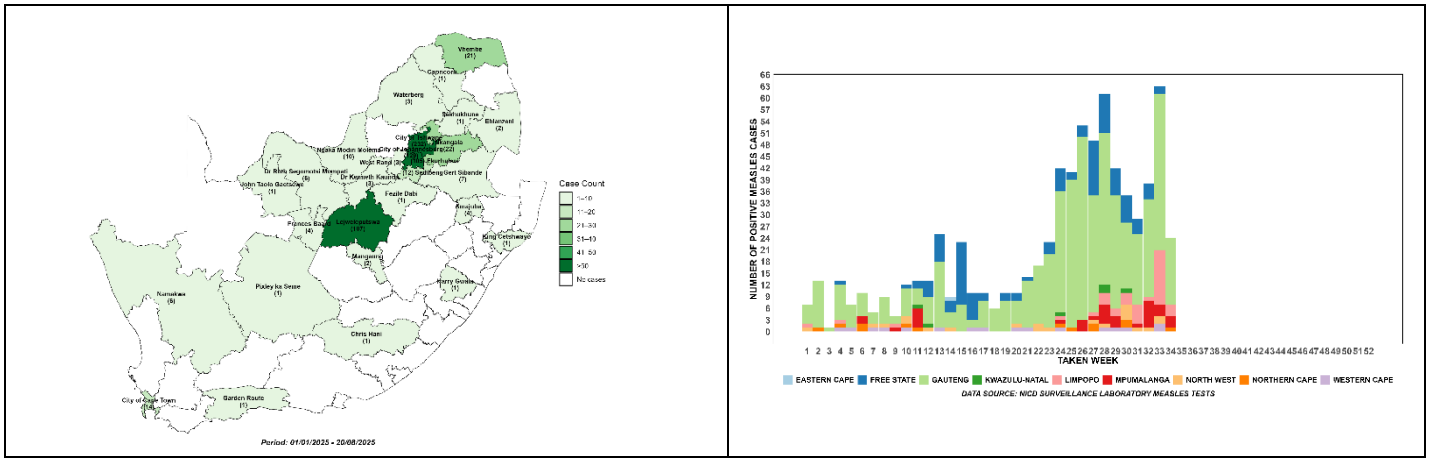

Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 34 of 2025 in South Africa.

Update on the measles outbreak in South Africa

Gauteng province measles outbreak update

Gauteng province continues to report a high number, with 503 laboratory-confirmed cases reported from epi-week 1 to 34 of 2025 (Figure 2). The majority of the laboratory-confirmed cases were reported in the metropolitan areas with the distribution of cases as follow: City of Johannesburg (132), City of Tshwane (244), Ekurhuleni (108), Sedibeng (16), and West Rand (3). The highest reported measles cases in epi-week 28 and epi-week 34 were reported from the City of Johannesburg, City of Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Sedibeng. Gauteng province is continuing with supplementary measles immunisation activities to reduce the transmission of the

measles virus. Measles IgM positive cases should be followed to monitor if they do not have measles complications, and be referred to healthcare facilities for further clinical management.

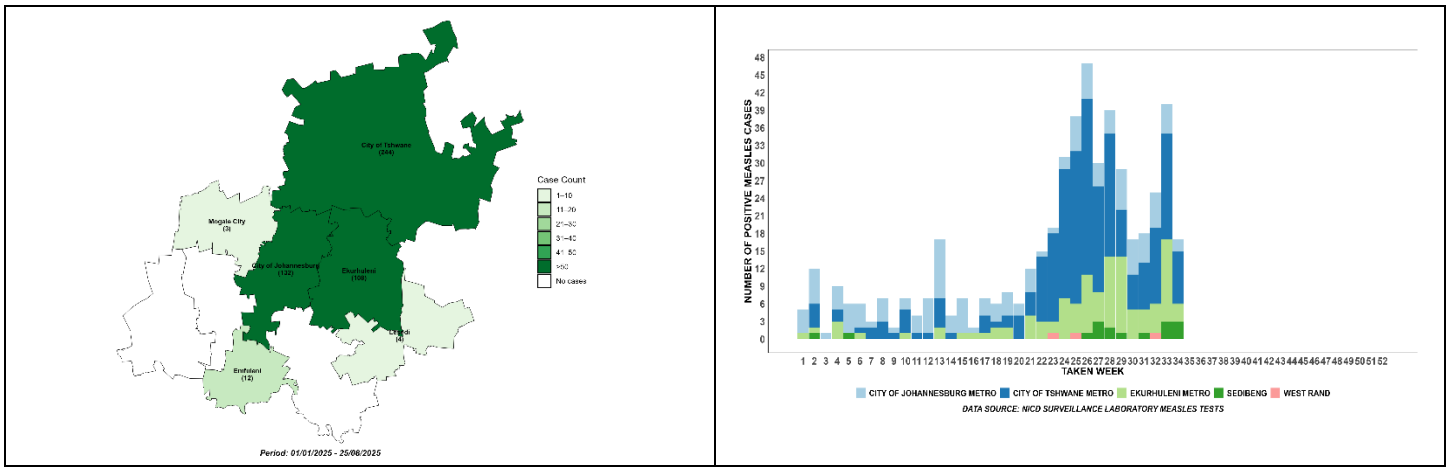

Figure 2: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 34 of 2025 in Gauteng province.

Free State province measles outbreak update

Free State province continues to report laboratory-confirmed measles cases, with 110 cases reported from epi-week 1 to 34 of 2025 (Figure 3). The majority of the laboratory-confirmed cases were reported in the Lejweleputswa district, which reported 107 cases, and 9 cases were reported from epi-weeks 31 to 34. The measles cases in Lejweleputswa district were decreasing after the measles outbreak was declared and the public health interventions were implemented. Measles transmission was observed in different parts of the district, having started in the Matjhabeng local municipality. The number of laboratory-confirmed measles cases are increasing in the Nala municipality bordering Matjhabeng municipality in the same district. Measles surveillance should be strengthened, and supplementary immunisation activities for measles immunisation extended to areas not covered previously to prevent transmission of the measles virus to new areas.

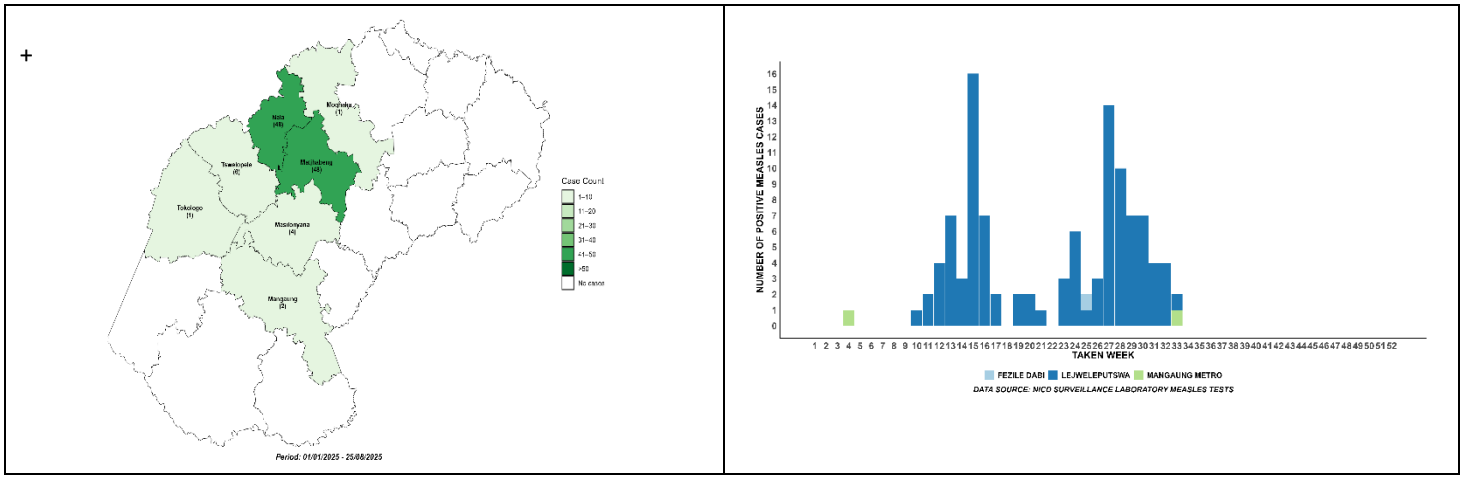

Figure 3: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 34 of 2025, Free State province.

Limpopo province and Mpumalanga province measles outbreaks

From epi-week week 28, Limpopo province reported an increase in the number of laboratory-confirmed case in Vhembe district, which shares the border with the Republic of Zimbabwe. Limpopo Province reported 32 laboratory-confirmed measles cases whose specimens were taken between epi-week 28 and week 34. Thirty laboratory-confirmed cases were reported from Vhembe district (Figure 4). In Mpumalanga province, 35 laboratory confirmed measles were reported from epi-week 1 to week 34. From epi-week 24 to week 34 there was an increase in laboratory confirmed cases in Gert Sibande and Nkangala districts, with 5 and 21 laboratory-confirmed cases reported, respectively (Figure 4). Most of the affected persons were aged between 1 and 14 years in both provinces.

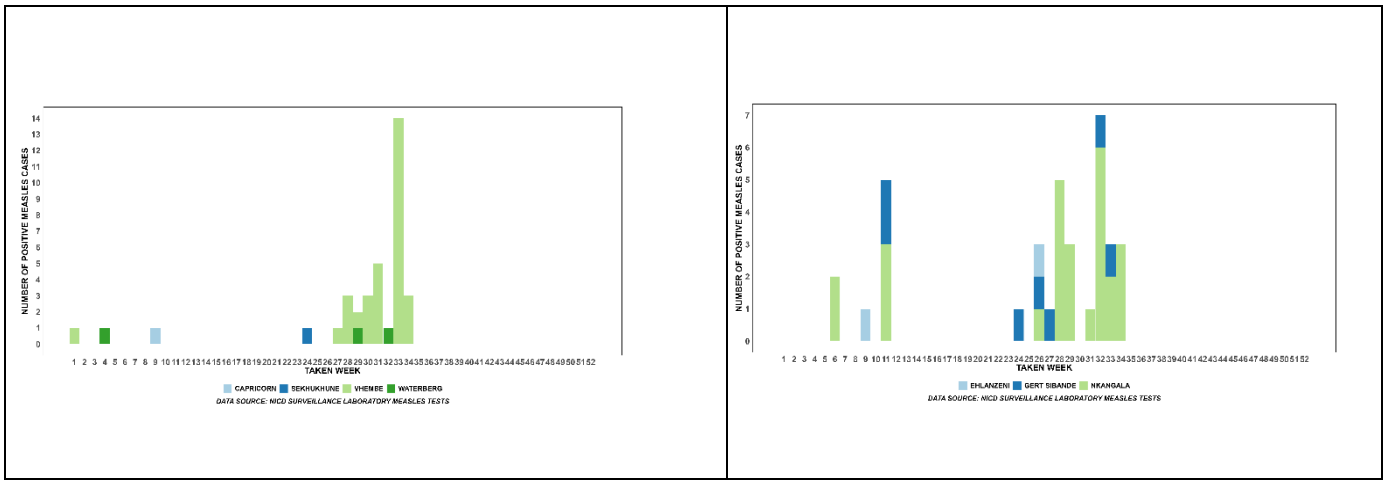

Figure 4: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 34 of 2025, Limpopo province and Mpumalanga province.

Measles surveillance

Measles outbreaks are detected in South Africa with an increasing number of districts reporting measles outbreaks. Measles infection has been observed mostly in autumn and spring in South Africa based on surveillance data of previous years. Sporadic measles cases have been reported in the Western Cape Province, in the City of Cape Town. Measles outbreaks are ongoing in the Lejweleputswa (FS), Vhembe (LP) and Nkangala (MP) districts, where the measles outbreak definition of two or more laboratory confirmed measles cases in a district within 30 days has been met. All measles outbreaks are characterised by measles virus infection of under immunised children, that is, children who did not received two measles doses as recommended by the National Department of Health immunisation schedule, or children who have never received any measles vaccine dose.

Table 1: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases detected from epi-week 1 to epi-week 34 of 2025, 01 January to 22 August 2025 in South Africa.

Province	0-6 Months	7-11 Months	1-4 Years	5-9 Years	10-14 Years	15-49 Years	>= 50 Years	Total
Eastern Cape	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	**1**
Free State	6	4	17	53	15	15	0	**110**
Gauteng	62	23	85	167	63	100	3	**503**
KwaZulu-Natal	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	**6**
Limpopo	1	0	10	14	4	6	1	**36**
Mpumalanga	0	0	10	11	10	4	0	**35**
North West	0	0	3	12	6	0	0	**21**
Northern Cape	1	0	2	5	4	1	0	**13**
Western Cape	3	2	2	2	1	5	1	**16**
Total	73	29	130	269	104	131	5	741

Recommendations

- Measles surveillance should be strengthened nationally with the provinces urged to do measles risk assessment and continue to do targeted or supplementary measles immunisation activities, or campaigns in areas with low measles coverage and high numbers of children who never received vaccines (Zero dose areas).
- Measles awareness should be conducted in areas with localised outbreaks in order to alert the communities about the ongoing measles outbreak and prevention of the disease.
- Public awareness efforts to address vaccine hesitancy with relevant stakeholders in the communities must be intensified
- Case reporting and contact tracing should be improved.
- Parents should be encouraged to vaccinate their children to protect them against measles infections.
- Parents whose children have missed their scheduled routine measles immunisation vaccine doses are encouraged to ensure that their children receive a measles vaccination catch-up dose.
- Awareness about complications of measles infection such as pneumonia, ear infections, diarrhoea, encephalitis (swelling of the brain) and death should be intensified.
- Clinicians should report the suspected measles cases and collect blood specimens for laboratory confirmation, and also report patients who develop measles signs and symptoms using the NMC Surveillance System https://www.nicd.ac.za/nmc-overview/overview/.
- Strengthening routine immunisation services and launching a mass vaccination campaign targeting children up to 15 years of age is also recommended.