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MEASLES WEEKLY SITUATION REPORT FOR SOUTH AFRICA
Report for week ending 12 September 2025, epidemiological week 37
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, as well as a completed case investigation form, to the NICD from all patients presenting with fever, maculopapular rash and one of the three 'c's (cough, coryza and conjunctivitis). Measles can cause severe complications, including pneumonia, ear infections, diarrhoea, encephalitis (swelling of the brain), and even death.

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 37 of 2025, national measles surveillance has detected an increase in measles cases (Figure 1). As of 12 September 2025, a total of 1,019 laboratory-confirmed measles cases have been reported, with 588 cases in Gauteng province, 139 in Limpopo, 131 in Free State and 72 in Mpumalanga. Since the last update in epidemiological week 36, 33 new measles cases were reported in the Western Cape, 14 in Gauteng, 3 in Limpopo and 4 in Mpumalanga. The reported measles infections were mainly in children aged 1-14 years (820/1019, 80.5%), with an increase in laboratory-confirmed cases in people aged 15 years and above in Gauteng, Free State and Limpopo (Table 1). Any person who has never been infected with measles or has not received the measles vaccine is at risk of having measles virus infection.

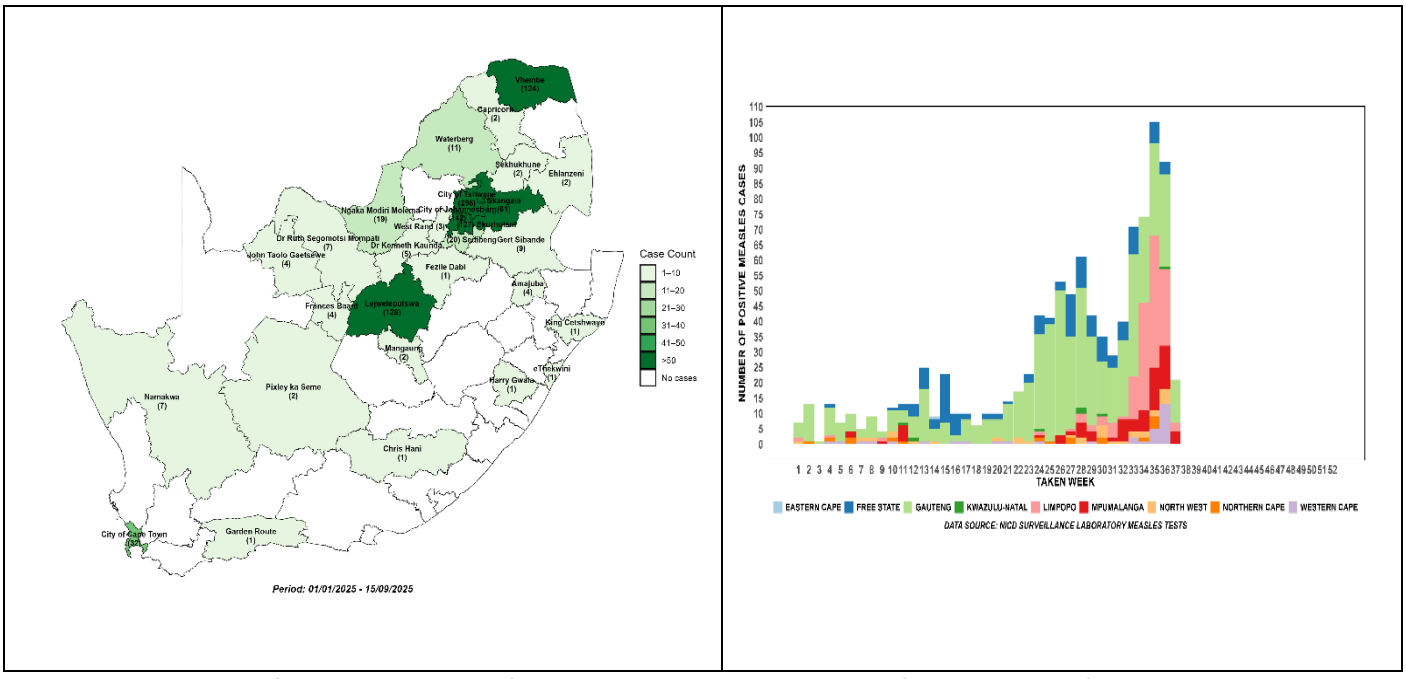

Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025 in South Africa.

Update on the measles outbreak in South Africa

Gauteng province measles outbreak updates

Gauteng province continues to report a high number of cases, with 588 laboratory-confirmed cases reported from epi-week 1 to 37 of 2025 (Figure 2). The majority of the laboratory-confirmed cases were reported in the metropolitan areas, with the distribution of cases as follows: City of Johannesburg (142), City of Tshwane (296), Ekurhuleni (127), Sedibeng (20), and West Rand (3), with 457/588 (77.7%) cases being children below 15 years, including 92 cases amongst children below 1 year. The highest number of measles cases was reported from epi-week 29 to epi-week 37 from the City of Johannesburg, City of Tshwane, Ekurhuleni metro and Sedibeng District Municipality. Wastewater detection continues to provide evidence of ongoing excretion, and therefore transmission, in these same districts (Figure 3). Gauteng province is continuing with supplementary measles immunisation activities to reduce the transmission of the infection. Measles IgM-positive cases should be monitored for complications and be referred to healthcare facilities for further clinical management if any complications occur. Contacts of laboratory-confirmed cases should be vaccinated to protect them against measles infection and to prevent the spread of the disease.

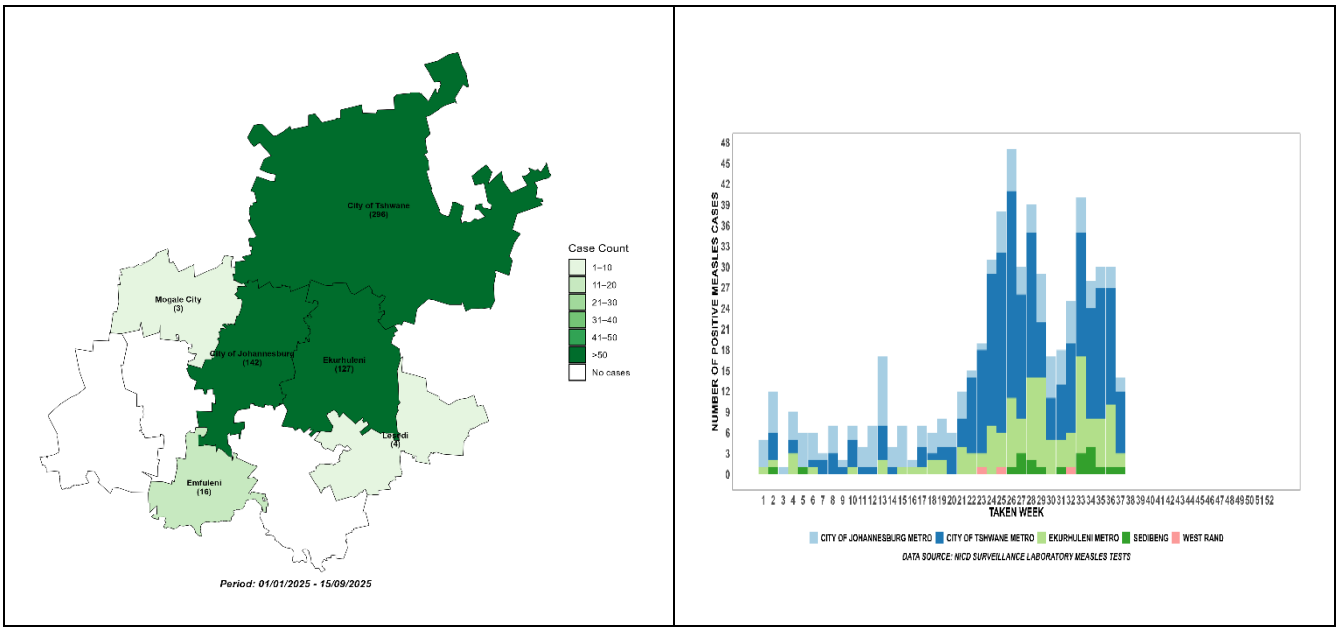

Figure 2: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025 in Gauteng province.

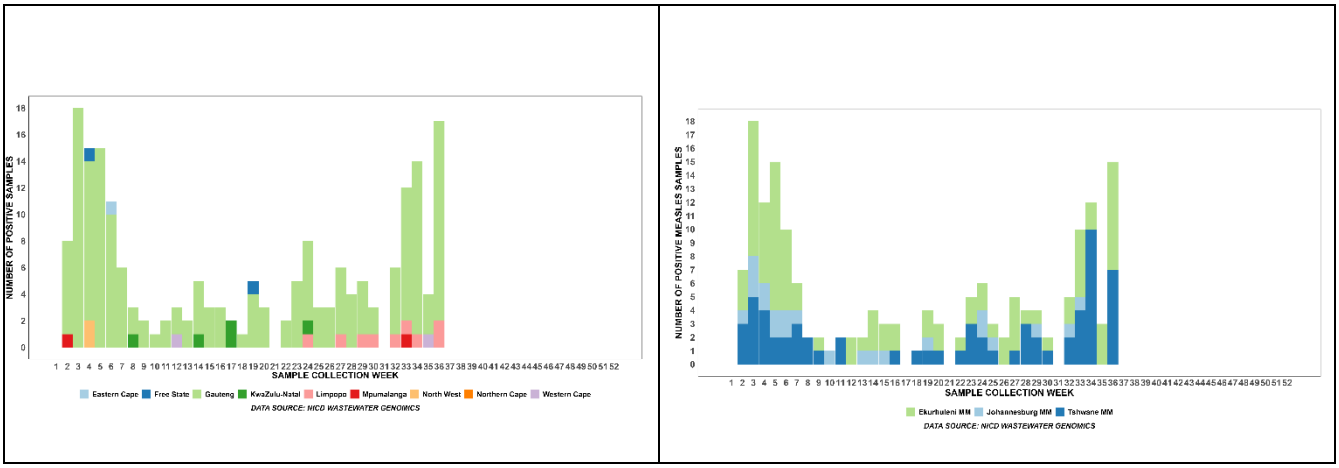

Figure 3: Number of wastewater samples positive for measles from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025 in South Africa (left) and Gauteng Province (right).

Free State province measles outbreak update

No new cases were reported in week 37 in Free State province. There were 131 cases reported from epi-week 1 to 36 of 2025 (Figure 4), with 98/131 (74.8%) cases being children aged 1-14 years. Measles surveillance should be strengthened, and supplementary immunisation activities for measles immunisation should be extended to areas previously not included in the measles vaccination campaign to prevent transmission of the infection to new areas. Measles contact tracing should be conducted, and the measles vaccine should be administered to those who are susceptible to the infection.

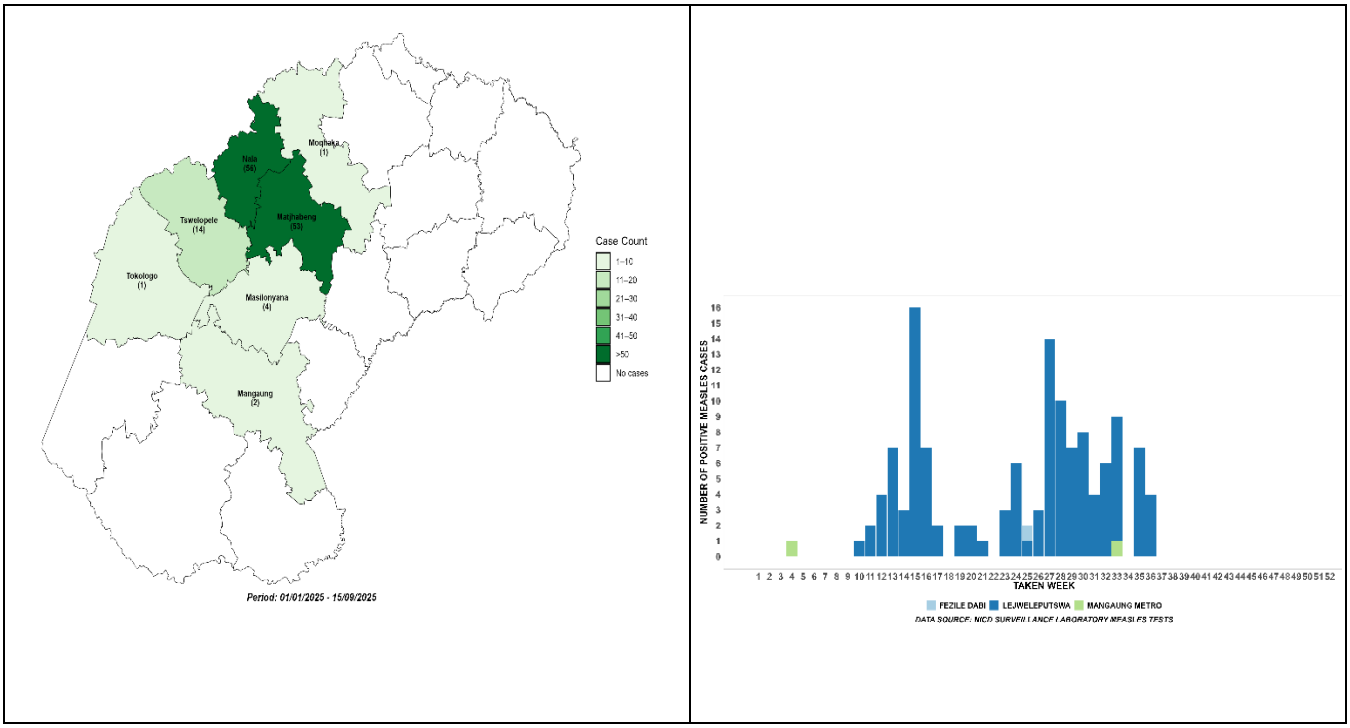

Figure 4: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025, Free State..

Limpopo province measles outbreak update

In Limpopo province, 139 laboratory-confirmed measles cases have been reported from epi-week 1 to epi-week 37, with children aged 1-14 years (111/139; 79.9%) being the most affected. From epi-week 27, Limpopo province reported an

increase in the number of laboratory-confirmed cases in the Vhembe District Municipality, with 124 cases reported as of the end of epi-week 37 (Figure 5). The measles outbreak is currently affecting the Musina Local Municipality in the northern part of Limpopo. Laboratory-confirmed measles cases were also detected in the Waterberg Sedibeng District Municipality in epi-weeks 35 and 36, while an adult case was detected in the Sekhukhune District Municiplaity in Epi-week 36.

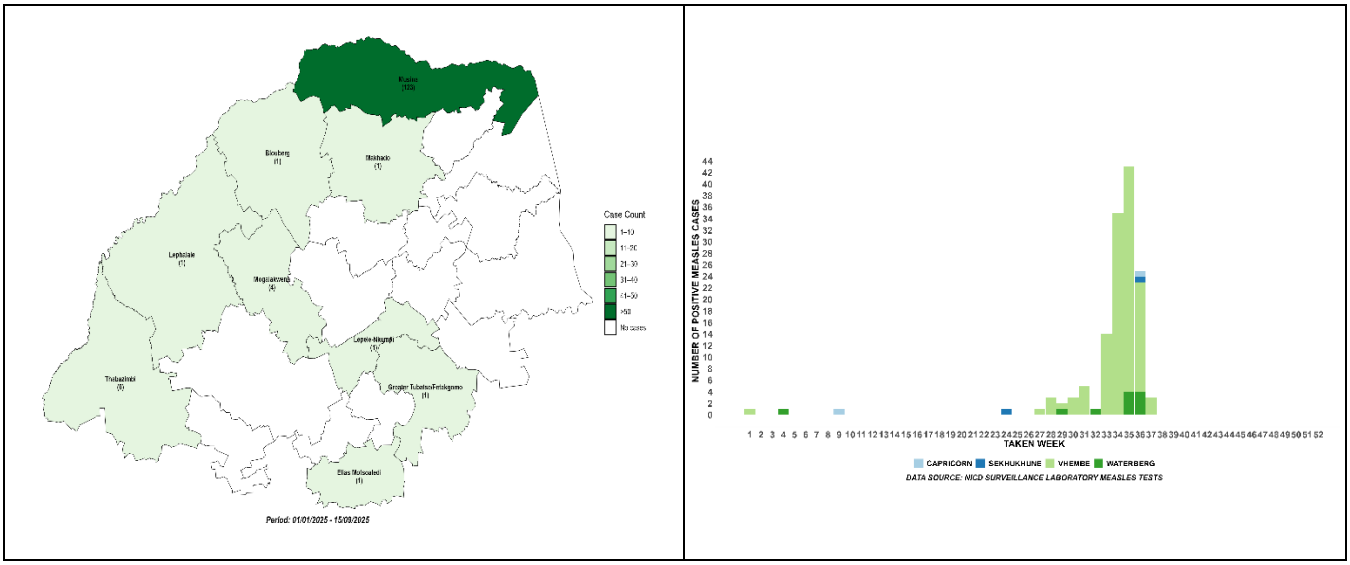

Figure 5: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025, Limpopo.

Mpumalanga province measles outbreak update

In Mpumalanga province, 72 laboratory-confirmed measles cases have been reported from epi-week 1 to week 37, with 58/72 (80.6%) cases being children aged 1-14 years. From epi-week 26 to week 37, there was an increase in laboratory-confirmed cases in Nkangala District Municipality, with 56 laboratory-confirmed cases reported, and no new laboratory–confirmed measles cases were reported in epi-weeks 36 and 37 in Gert Sibande District Municipality (Figure 6). Most of the affected persons were aged between 1 and 14 years in both districts. Both Gert Sibande and Nkangala District Municipalities, where the measles outbreak is currently ongoing, share the border with Gauteng province, with the latter reporting the highest number of measles cases in the country.

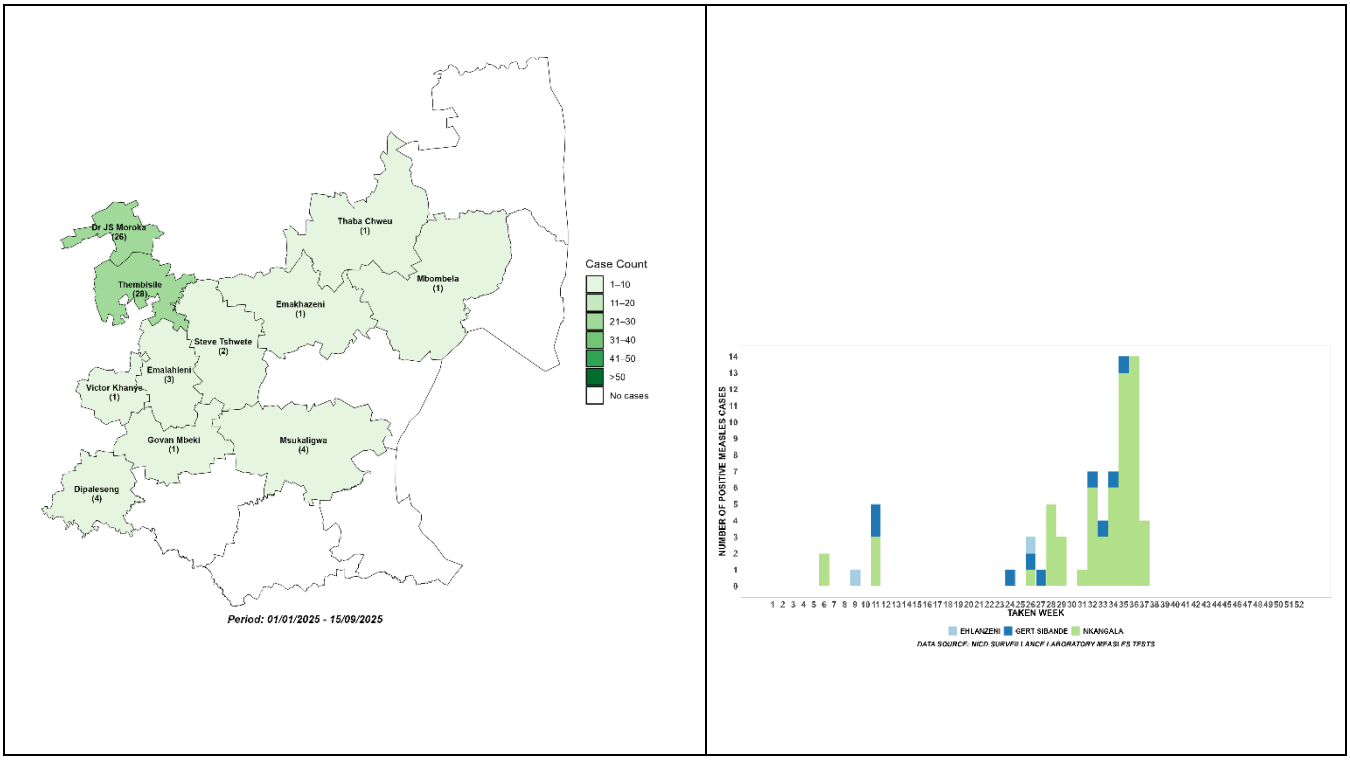

Figure 6: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025, Mpumalanga.

Western Cape province measles outbreak update

No new cases of measles were reported in Western Cape province in epi week 37. Western Cape province reported 33 laboratory-confirmed measles cases, with 19 cases reported from epi-week 34 to 36 of 2025 (Figure 7). Overall, 20/33 (60.6%) cases reported in the province were children aged 1-14 years. The majority of the cases were reported in the City of Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality, which reported 32 cases, with 21 cases reported between epi-weeks 32 and 36. The measles cases were mostly detected in the Khayelitsha area.

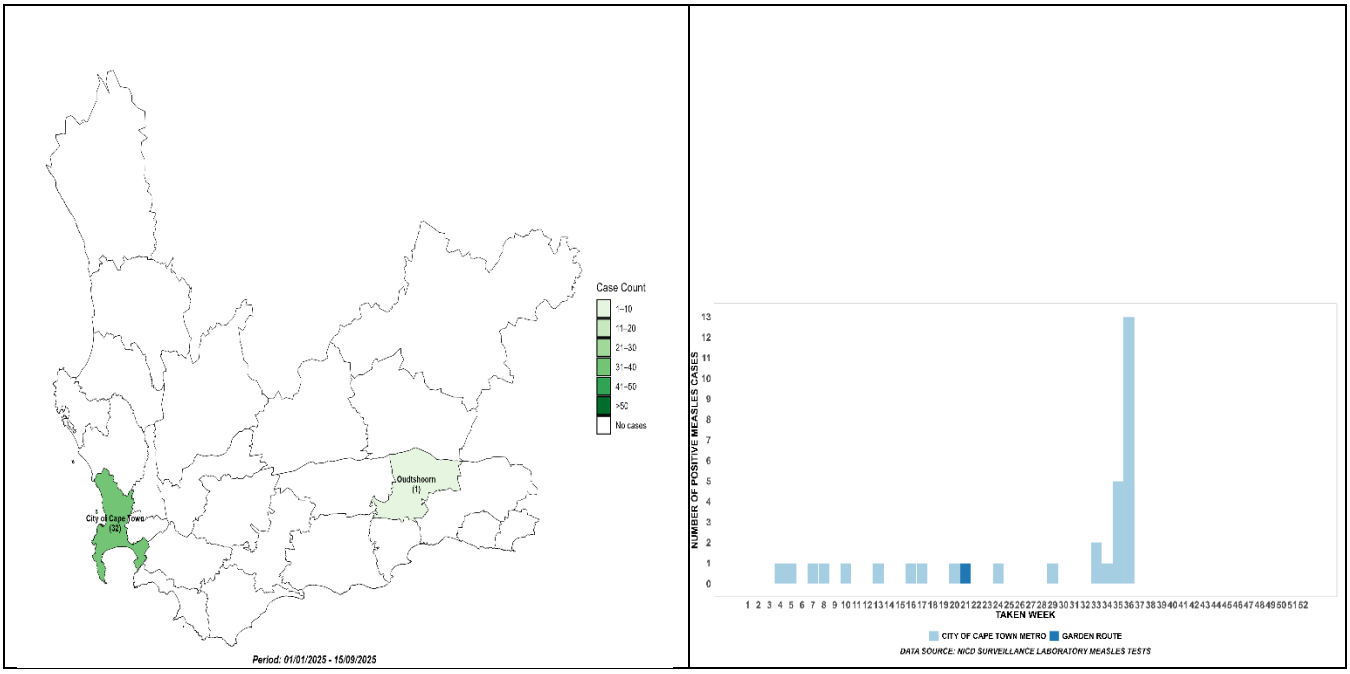

Figure 7: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases from epidemiological week 1 to 37 of 2025, Western Cape Province

Measles surveillance

Measles outbreaks are ongoing in different parts of South Africa, with Gauteng being the most affected province. Additional outbreaks have been reported in Vhembe district in the Limpopo, Gert Sibande and Nkangala District Municipalities in Mpumalanga, as well as in the City of Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality in the Western Cape province.

Measles remains endemic in South Africa, with cases typically increasing during autumn and spring.

Although sporadic cases are reported in areas with high measles vaccination coverage throughout the year in South Africa, outbreaks usually occur in areas with low vaccination coverage, where many children are either unvaccinated or under-vaccinated (having received only one instead of the recommended two doses). Therefore, maintaining high vaccine coverage is important for preventing widespread outbreaks.

This report further indicated that 199/1019 laboratory-confirmed measles cases (19.5%) are persons older than 15 years of age, possibly indicative of an immunity gap in the older age groups.

Table 1: Laboratory-confirmed measles cases detected from epi-week 1 to epi-week 37 of 2025, 01 January to 12 September 2025 in South Africa.

PROVINCE	0-6 months	7-11 months	1-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14yrs	15-19 yrs	20-24 yrs	25-29 yrs	>= 30 yrs	Total
Eastern Cape	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Free State	6	4	18	61	19	8	2	3	10	131
Gauteng	69	23	102	193	70	40	15	11	65	588
KwaZulu-Natal	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	0	0	7
Limpopo	1	3	24	60	27	8	2	3	11	139
Mpumalanga	0	0	14	27	17	4	3	2	5	72
North West	0	1	3	21	6	0	0	0	0	31
Northern Cape	1	0	2	6	7	0	1	0	0	17
Western Cape	6	1	4	14	2	1	1	1	3	33
Total	**83**	**32**	**169**	**387**	**149**	**61**	**24**	**20**	**94**	**1019**

Recommendations for public health interventions

- Measles awareness should be intensified in areas with localised outbreaks to alert the communities about the ongoing measles outbreak and the prevention of the disease.
- 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 take their children for a measles vaccine catch-up dose.
- Measles surveillance should be strengthened nationally to improve case reporting and contact tracing.
- Provinces are urged to conduct measles risk assessment and continue with targeted or supplementary measles immunisation activities or campaigns in areas with low measles coverage and high numbers of children who have either never received vaccines (zero dose areas) or are under vaccinated (children who received one instead of the recommended two measles vaccine doses)
- Public awareness efforts must be intensified to address vaccine hesitancy by engaging with all relevant stakeholders in the affected communities
- Clinicians should investigate 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.