



## **Standard Operating Procedures:**

### **Reporting of COVID-19 onto Notifiable Medical Condition Electronic Application Platform or Paper Case Notification Form**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The first case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was reported on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 by the World Health Organization (WHO) country office following a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has been confirmed as the causative virus of COVID-19, and on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, WHO declared it 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 are of public health importance and can pose significant public health risks both nationally and internationally; they require rapid detection, prompt risk assessment, notification, verification and public health response and action. COVID-19 is a category 1 Notifiable Medical Condition (NMC), therefore, notification should be made immediately to the district or provincial health authorities.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to outline the process of reporting of COVID-19 using NMC electronic Application or paper based reporting platform, in order to facilitate rapid and timeous communication and targeted public health action as stipulated in the above-mentioned regulations.

### **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 Notifiable Medical Condition Surveillance System (NMCSS).

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Public and private health facility level**

According to the regulations<sup>1</sup>, ANY healthcare provider (doctor or nurse) who makes a diagnosis of COVID-19 must immediately report the case to the district communicable disease co-ordinator (CDC), using one of the NMC platforms.

### **District level**

The District CDC must ensure that relevant details of all cases that test positive for COVID-19 are reported to the District Outbreak Response Team, to coordinate and implement public health response (including contact tracing). The District CDC should also ensure upward reporting of cases to the Provincial CDC.

### **Provincial level**

The Provincial CDC must 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 the 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 on the on 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*

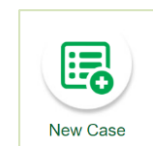
- If you do not have the NMC electronic Application (App) installed on your device, you can access the [NMC web portal](#) or download the [mobile App](#) from NICD website (under the Notifiable Medical Conditions tab). You can also install the NMC mobile App from the Google Play store, for Android devices.
- 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

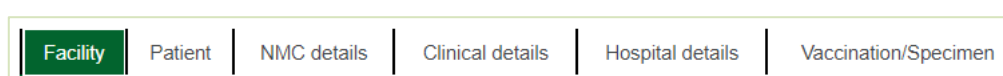
- To access the **COVID-19 module** click the “COVID-19” icon located on the main NMC App landing page.



- 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. (Note: *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

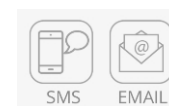


- Go through each ‘tab’ and complete all the necessary fields. (Note: *mandatory fields, marked with a red asterisk \* should be completed for every case*)

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

## Editing a laboratory case notification

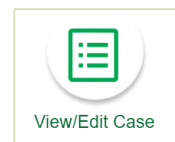
- COVID-19 positive results from public and private laboratories feed directly into the NMC database on a daily basis. These laboratory notifications are accessible through the 'inbox' of the COVID-19 module, on the NMC web portal or mobile App.
- A healthcare worker can use the "View/Edit Case" icon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

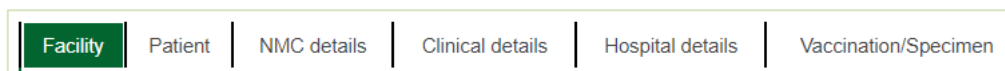
- The Current tab shows cases that are not older than 15 days.
- The Archive tab shows cases that are older than 15 days.



- 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 lower right window.

- 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 missing fields. (Note: *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 ([COCID-19 Case Definition](#))**

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

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