

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTORATE:  
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND LABORATORY SERVICES  
(SEE SECTION 6.1.2 OF THE POLICY GUIDELINES)**

The main objective of the directorate is to prevent, control and treat communicable diseases in order to reduce morbidity, mortality and disability due to infectious diseases. There are however, various activities that are attached to food-borne outbreak or food poisoning that the directorate is involved in.

- Refer the notification of the outbreak to the Directorate: Food Control, including information on the food product found to be responsible

The directorate has established provincial outbreak response teams that are responsible for identification of outbreak or potential outbreak. It is the responsibility of the provincial communicable disease control coordinator to inform the national communicable disease coordinator of any outbreaks at local level. The national communicable disease coordinator then informs all the stakeholders responsible for various outbreaks at national level, e.g. Food Control and Environmental Health Directorates in case of food poisoning.

- Notify other provinces of the outbreak and request reports on the number of patients infected and deaths and maintain records thereof

The National Outbreak Response Team through media and formal communication notifies other provinces of any reported outbreak in a province in order for the other provinces to be on the alert.

- Draft a media release, in consultation with relevant role players, and refer it to the Chief Directorate: Communication for publication by the media

Whenever there are outbreaks, the National Outbreak Response Team draft the technical inputs for media release, which are submitted to the Cluster: Communication for publication. If the outbreak prevails for a longer period daily media releases may be necessary. The communication Cluster is the only unit authorised to speak to the media, both print and electronic. However, there are instances that the Communication section can request the technical staff to communicate directly to the media.

- Determine treatment strategies for patients and refer to the provinces so that they can forward the information to the various health service providers

Management of patients is the responsibility of the province since they are at operational level. Treatment protocols for specific diseases need to be adhered to. The Essential Drug List is the official guideline clinicians are expected to use. It should also be noted that private institutions also manage patients, and collaboration, especially in cases where public hospital lack infrastructure and expertise, should be implemented.