

EMERGENCE OF NDM-1 IN SOUTH AFRICA A NATIONAL ISSUE

Joint media statement issued by the National Department of Health and Life Healthcare.

Thursday, 20 October 2011

The emergence of the *Klebsiella pneumoniae* producing NDM-1 enzyme in South Africa is a matter of national concern. It should be noted that the institution-based outbreak has been contained through the effective measures implemented thus far. The possibility of further spread is limited.

NDM-1 was identified at Life The Glynnwood Hospital in Benoni, where ten patients treated were confirmed to have NDM-1. An outpatient at Charlotte Maxeke Hospital in Johannesburg was earlier also confirmed with this multidrug resistant strain of bacteria. There are presently still three patients in Life The Glynnwood hospital with the NDM-1 bacteria, and they are in a stable condition.

Representatives of the national, provincial and district Departments of Health met with Life The Glynnwood management and with representatives of Life Healthcare (of which the hospital forms part) as well as with other key roleplayers on Wednesday (19 October) to assess the situation and determine the way forward.

Life The Glynnwood was commended for identifying the NDM-1 strain promptly and for implementing effective interventions in response to the outbreak and to prevent its spread. These measures include effective treatment and isolation of affected patients, strengthening infection control measures, screening of around 400 patients and staff as well as commissioning an independent clinical audit.

A coordinating outbreak response team was formed that will meet regularly to monitor and redirect response to the outbreak when needed. A monitoring system within the public and private sectors will also be set up.

A formal report is being compiled and will be submitted to the Minister of Health. The parties will furthermore work together in formalising a NDM-1 treatment protocol for clinicians. They will also document lessons learned from the experience at Life The Glynnwood, to share with other roleplayers. These actions will be of immense value to other hospitals which may be faced with a similar situation in future.

Prof Adriano Duse, an appointee of the Department of Health and the Head of Clinical Microbiology and Infection Control at Wits University as well as the National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS), will continue to be the spokesperson on the NDM-1 outbreak.

Ends.

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