



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Date:	3 July 2021		
To:	The Honorable Acting Minister Ms M.Khubayi-Ngubane, Acting Minister of Health.	From:	Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) on COVID-19

FACILITY READINESS WORKSTREAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESURGENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Problem Statement

This MAC on COVID-19 advisory aims to support the implementation of the guidelines and recommendations of the Facility Readiness Work Stream on the management, preparations and planning for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Task to Committee

To support the preparation and management of Surge Capacity at all designated health facilities to reduce the morbidity and mortality of patients with moderate and severe COVID-19 infections and to ensure compliance with the occupational health and safety guidelines issued by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD).

Background

Health facilities' management, preparations and planning for the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa requires integration of the predicted requirements for general and critical care bedspace, ensuring sufficient oxygen supply, and coordinating the required staffing, equipment and medicines at all levels in the health system to ensure equitable availability of these resources.

Evidence review

- Best practices solutions have been developed for facility readiness during the previous waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa as well as from international disaster medicine experience, such as those published by the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine (WADEM) and the international Advanced Life Support Group (ALSG).
- Accurate, reliable and up-to-date data is a key requirement for the preparation of adequate hospital surge capacity. This has been demonstrated by the value of accurate bed utilization data in local and international experience.
- Effective Non Pharmaceutical Interventions remain essential to reduce excessive demand on hospital beds.

Recommendations

- Compulsory, daily, complete and accurate updates of all the fields in the DATCOV Hospital Information system in line with the National Health Council Resolution.
- Compulsory daily reporting of all hospital bed occupancy figures for general and critical care levels.
- Establish a provincial bed coordinating capability, such as a bed bureau, within the private and public sectors, coordinating bed capacities.
- The comprehensive National COVID-19 Health Care Surge Facility Strategy (May 2020), should be adopted in all Health Care Facilities.
- Hospitals to implement a “whole hospital strategy” which prioritises COVID-19 and emergencies and delays non-urgent clinical services, thereby making more staff potentially available for a comprehensive pandemic response.
- Ensure optimal and efficient use of appropriately trained healthcare professionals taking cognizance of their scope of practice and interacting with the relevant professional regulatory bodies in this regard.
- Establish a national coordinating structure on oxygen utilisation covering both public and private facilities.
- Provincial Departments of Health should negotiate service level agreements and tariffs with the private sector to facilitate the possible transfer of patients between the sectors as required in disaster situations and the sharing of resources.
- All health establishments to comply with occupational health and safety guidelines issued by the Department of Employment and Labour and NICD.

Rationale for recommendation

The implementation of the measures above are required to optimize the availability of Intensive Care Unit, High Care and General hospital beds to better manage resurgences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for consideration of this advisory.

Kind regards,



PROF KOLEKA MLISANA
CO-CHAIRPERSONS: MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COVID-19
DATE: 3 July 2021



PROF MARIAN JACOBS

CC:

- » **Dr S Buthelezi (Director-General: Health)**
- » **Dr T Pillay (Deputy Director-General)**
- » **Incident Management Team**