

# SITUATION UPDATE ON LISTERIOSIS OUTBREAK, SOUTH AFRICA

Date of issue: 11 January 2018. Issued by: Centre for Enteric Diseases and Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response

## Summary

- The outbreak continues, with 21 additional cases recorded since the last update.
- At present, the source of the outbreak is not known.
- Cases of listeriosis will continue to be investigated, with trace back and further investigation of any positive food/environmental samples.
- The national departments of Health, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Trade and Industry are working closely with agriculture and food industry stakeholders to intensify investigation efforts aimed at identifying the possible source/s of the outbreak whilst enhancing food safety interventions.

As of 11 January 2018, a total of 748 laboratory-confirmed listeriosis cases have been reported to NICD since 01 January 2017 (Figure 1). Most cases have been reported from Gauteng Province (61%, 455/748) followed by Western Cape (13%, 95/748) and KwaZulu-Natal (7%, 53/748) provinces. Cases have been diagnosed in both public (65%, 490/747) and private (35%, 257/747) healthcare sectors. Diagnosis was based most commonly on the isolation of *Listeria monocytogenes* in blood culture (70%, 527/748), followed by CSF (24%, 179/748). Where age was reported (n=717), ages range from birth to 93 years (median 26 years) and 40% (289/717) are neonates aged  $\leq 28$  days (Figure 2). Of neonatal cases, 96% (278/289) had early-onset disease (birth to  $\leq 6$  days). Females account for 56% (397/713) of cases where gender is reported. Final outcome data is available for 21% (160/748) of cases, of which 42% (67/160) died.

## Note:

- Case data is the best available at time of publication.
- Due to recent challenges with NHLS laboratory information system data (since epidemiological week 47) and a possible lag in reporting as a result of the public holidays, case numbers for weeks 47 – 52 of 2017 are likely to change on a daily basis and trends must be interpreted with caution.

- ❖ All healthcare workers are requested to complete case investigation forms (CIFs – available on the website) for case-patients with listeriosis, and submit these to the NICD ([outbreak@nicd.ac.za](mailto:outbreak@nicd.ac.za)).
- ❖ Clinical listeriosis management guidelines are available on the website ([www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za)).
- ❖ Where clinicians suspect listeriosis but specimens (including CSF and blood) are culture negative, a polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-based test can be performed at the NICD. Please contact the Centre for Enteric Diseases on (011) 555 0343 for further details.
- ❖ The NICD continues to operate its 24-hour hotline for healthcare workers.

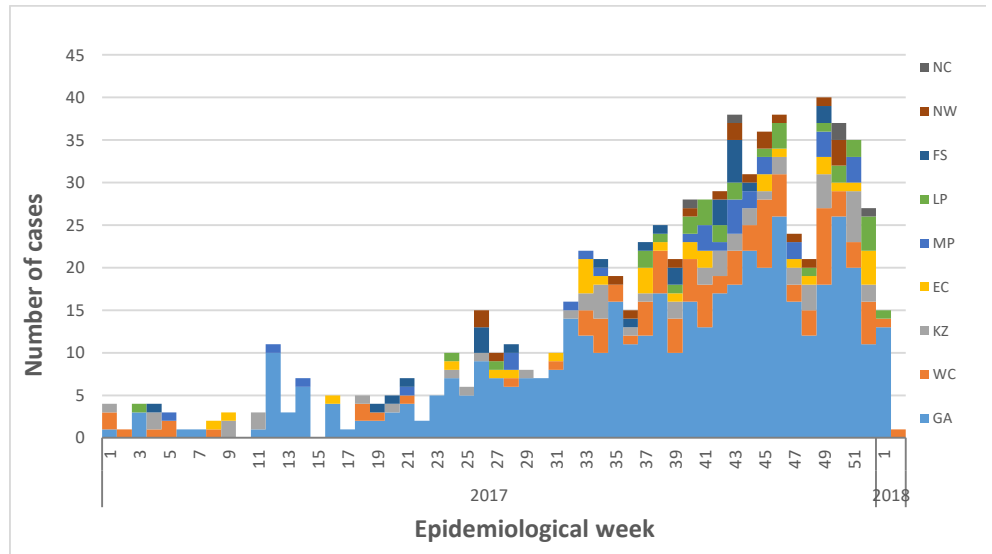


Figure 1: Epidemic curve of laboratory-confirmed listeriosis cases by epidemiological week and date of sample collection and province, South Africa, 01 January 2017 to 11 January 2018 (n=748)

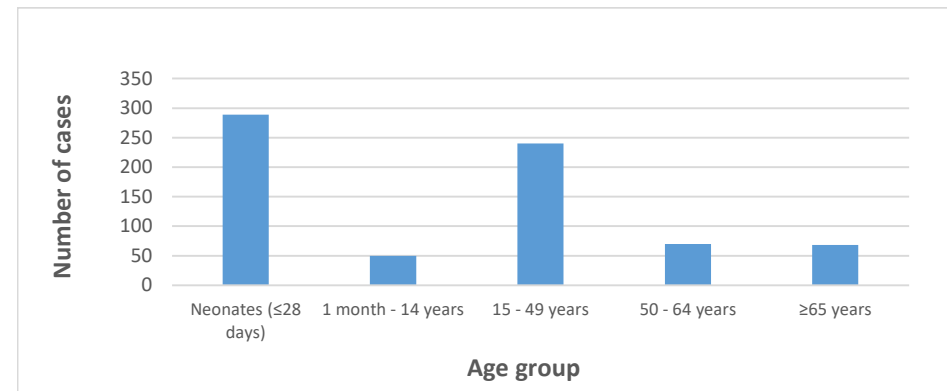


Figure 2: Age distribution of laboratory-confirmed listeriosis cases, South Africa, 01 January 2017 to 11 January 2018 (n=717)