

**Date of issue:** 8 March 2018, using data at close of business 8 March 2018

**Report issued by:** Centre for Enteric Diseases (CED) and Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response, Outbreak Response Unit (ORU), National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD)/ National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS).

**Cautionary note** Data collection and cleaning is ongoing and case numbers will change from day to day

## **Summary**

- A total of 967 cases has been reported since 2017. Since the last situational update (3 March 2018), 11 additional cases that occurred in 2017 have been identified through laboratory review, and 8 additional cases have been reported to the NICD over the last few days.
- Outcome at the end of hospitalisation is known for an additional 10 cases, bringing the total with known outcome to 669/967 (69%) patients. 183/669 (27%) patients are known to have died.
- Health care workers are urged to continue with vigilance for new cases as persons who have consumed implicated processed meat products over the past few weeks may continue to present with listeriosis

Following the declaration of the listeria outbreak in December 2017, a multi-sectoral outbreak response was initiated. Findings were shared by the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi at a public media briefing on 4 March 2018 (statement available at [www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za)), and are summarized below. In addition, the National Department of Health requested a full recall of implicated processed meat products.

## **Descriptive epidemiology (as determined from available laboratory information systems data)**

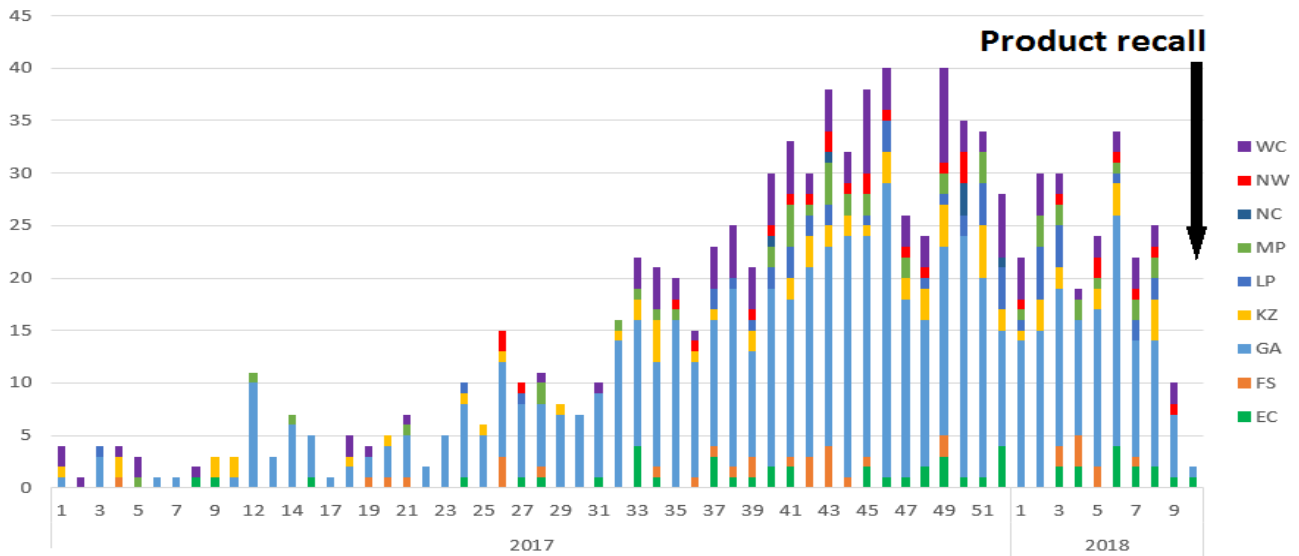
As of 8 March 2018, 967 laboratory-confirmed listeriosis cases have been reported to NICD from all provinces since 01 January 2017 (Figure 1). To date, 749 cases were reported in 2017, and 218 cases in 2018. Females account for 56% (525/933) cases where gender is reported. Where age was reported (n=930), ages range from birth to 92 years (median 18 years) and 42% (390/930) are neonates aged  $\leq 28$  days (Figure 2). Of neonatal cases, 96% (373/390) had early-onset disease (birth to  $\leq 6$  days). Most cases have been reported from Gauteng Province (59%, 572/967) followed by Western Cape (12%, 115/967) and KwaZulu-Natal (7%, 68/967) provinces. Cases have been diagnosed in both public (65%, 630/967) and private (35%, 337/967) healthcare sectors. Amongst 967 cases, 709 (73%) specimens that were positive for *Listeria monocytogenes* on blood culture, while 208 (22%) were positive on cerebrospinal fluid. 70/967 (7%) specimens were positive from a variety of other sites (stool, pus, abscess or other fluid). Four public sector patients had positive PCR test for *Listeria monocytogenes*, but these patients also had a positive culture.

## **Additional case data and outcome (where provided through completion of case investigation forms, provincial report or patient interview)**

Additional data on a limited number of cases is available where completed case investigation forms have been submitted or provincial investigations have been conducted. Race distribution amongst 308 cases is black (261, 85%), colored (21, 7%), white (25, 7%) and Asian (1, <1%). Outcome is known for 669/967 (69%) patients of whom 183 (27%) have died. Outcome by province and age category is tabulated and graphed below (Table 1 and Figure 2 respectively).

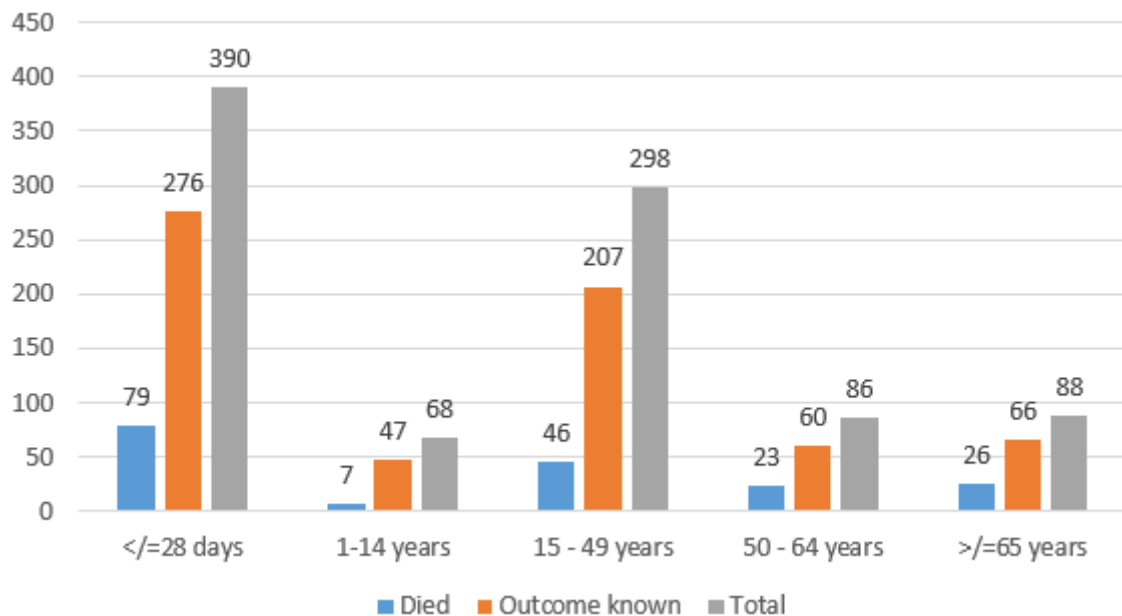
- ❖ All healthcare workers are requested to complete case investigation forms (CIFs – available on the website) for case-patients with listeriosis, and submit these to the NICD ([outbreak@nicd.ac.za](mailto:outbreak@nicd.ac.za)).
- ❖ Clinical listeriosis management guidelines are available on the website ([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. PCR can also be performed on placenta samples for investigation of stillbirths/miscarriages. 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 8 March 2018 (n=967)**



	EC	FS	GA	KZ	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	Total
Died	10	8	98	11	7	10	3	7	29	183
Discharged	18	19	261	30	25	34	2	17	80	486
Pending	22	7	213	27	15	2	1	5	6	298
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>967</b>

**Table 1. Outcome of 967 persons with laboratory-confirmed listeriosis by province, as per 8 March 2018**



**Figure 2: Age distribution and outcome of laboratory-confirmed cases of listeriosis identified from 01 January 2017 to 8 March (n=930 where age was reported)**