

NATIONAL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST COMMITTEE (NEMLC) BULLETIN

FOR THE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2021: MEETING OUTCOMES FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION

ACCESS TO STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

The following are the latest editions of the Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) and Essential Medicines List (EML):

- **Primary Health Care:** STGs and EML 2020 Edition
- **Hospital Level Adult:** STGs and EML 2019 Edition
- **Hospital Level Paediatric:** STGs and EML 2017 Edition
- **Tertiary and Quaternary:** EML September 2020 Edition

The following formats of the STGs and EML are accepted by the National Department of Health (NDoH):

- **EML Clinical Guide mobile application:** This is currently being re-platformed and users are temporarily unable to access the STGs and EML through the application. However, it is anticipated that users will be able to access the application by the end of March 2021.
- **PDF downloads from the NDoH website:** The website is currently being restructured and documents will be available shortly.
- **Knowledge Hub:**

https://www.knowledgehub.org.za/elibrary/primary-healthcare-phc-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list-south	Primary Health Care
https://www.knowledgehub.org.za/elibrary/hospital-level-paediatrics-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list	Hospital Level – Paediatrics
https://www.knowledgehub.org.za/elibrary/hospital-level-adults-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list-2nd	Hospital Level – Adults
https://www.knowledgehub.org.za/elibrary/hospital-level-tertiary-and-quaternary-essential-medicines-list-september-2020	Tertiary and Quaternary

- **Ideal Clinic:** PHC STGs and EML, 2020 edition has also been uploaded to this platform (click the documents tab) – <https://www.idealhealthfacility.org.za/>
- **EMGuidance mobile application:** To sign up, click on the link: <http://onelink.to/sy896k>

ACCESS TO CIRCULARS FROM THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Circulars that are developed by the Essential Drugs Programme are uploaded on the NDoH website. The website is currently being restructured and documents will be available shortly.

The following circulars were disseminated between January 2021 to March 2021:

- Availability of Lopinavir/ Ritonavir Oral Pellets to Children on Antiretroviral Treatment.
- Errata to the Primary Healthcare Standard Treatment Guidelines and Essential Medicine List, 2020, 7th edition and Adult Hospital Level Standard Treatment Guidelines and Essential Medicine List, 2019, 5th edition.

The NDoH has published a call for the application of suitably qualified individuals for appointment to the NEMLC and Tertiary and Quaternary Expert Review Committee. It would be appreciated if applications can be received by 15 March 2021.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND ADULT HOSPITAL LEVEL STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

- The following documents were reviewed and ratified for external comment:
 - **PHC/ Adult Hospital Level – Primaquine single dose (SLD) for malaria** – As uncertainty remains regarding the actual effect of SLD primaquine on the real world reduction of transmission and malaria eradication, additional evidence to be requested from the South African Malaria Elimination Committee, if available. There are currently no primaquine products that are registered by South African Health Products Regulatory Authority. The matter will be reviewed when a product becomes available for use on the South African market. Therefore, responsibility for the malaria elimination programme including guidance and Section 21 access of primaquine will be retained by the Programme.
 - **PHC/ Adult Hospital Level – PHCh7: Family planning: LNG-IUS 56 mg dose price offer** – The NEMLC requested more information regarding contraceptive efficacy between the various contraceptive agents, more detailed costing analysis and qualitative evidence of acceptability amongst end-users and healthcare workers. Matter to be re-tabled at the next NEMLC meeting in March 2021.
 - **PHC/ Adult Hospital Level – Opioid Substitution Therapy Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee Checklist** – draft checklist was ratified by NEMLC for circulation to the Provinces for comment:

Comments are due by the 25 March 2021 and may be submitted *via* e-mail to:

Ms Trudy Leong

E-mail: trudy.leong@health.gov.za

- The **Prioritisation Plan for the PHC and Adult Hospital Expert Review Committee** was discussed. NEMLC acknowledged the PHC/Adult Hospital Level Committee for piloting methodology that will increase transparency, and it was noted that the plan was dynamic. New topics are discussed and ranked routinely at each Committee meeting.
- The **NDoH's Influenza 2021 Guidelines** were discussed. Various concerns were raised and specifically why NEMLC's previous recommendations had not been considered. These will be communicated to the NDoH Programme and National Advisory Group on Immunisation for response.
- The **NDoH's Rabies 2021 Guidelines** were discussed. Various concerns were raised, that will be communicated to the NDoH Programme and National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) for response.

TERTIARY AND QUATERNARY HOSPITAL LEVEL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

- The following has been reviewed by NEMLC and ratified for publication:
 - **Fulvestrant – Metastatic Breast Cancer** – The review will be updated to capture the lack of evidence, however the NEMLC approved the inclusion of the agent.
 - **A new Tertiary list will be published and available after NEMLC meeting in March 2021.**

PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL LEVEL STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

- The following chapters have been reviewed by NEMLC:
 - **Chapter 3: Blood and Blood Forming Organs** – ratified for external comment.
 - **Chapter 22: Anaesthetics Chapter** – ratified for external comment.
 - **Chapter 15: Respiratory Chapter** – accepted for final ratification.
 - **COVID-19 management in children** – ratified for external comment. Once finalised this section will be disseminated and incorporated into the Infectious Disease Chapter at a later date.

NEMLC GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- **Methods Guide: Prioritisation** – NEMLC recommended that proposed prioritisation criteria be retained and the prioritisation tool be validated for local use.
- **Methods Guide Review** – NEMLC recommended that there will be ongoing training and discussions with the Committees on the methods guide, as well as wider dissemination and consultation with other stakeholders involved in HTA.