



GAUTENG PROVINCE
HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: All Media

ATT: News Editors, Health Reporters

For immediate release

Monday, 20 January 2020

CARBAPENEM-RESISTANT ENTEROBACTERALES (CRE) OUTBREAK CONFIRMED AT TEMBISA HOSPITAL

The Gauteng Department of Health confirms CRE Outbreak at Tembisa Hospital's Neonatal Unit.

We can confirm that 17 cases of CRE bacteraemia were reported during the period between 01 November to 31 December 2019, which sadly resulted in deaths of ten babies. It was suspected that the organism responsible for this outbreak was *Klebsiella pneumoniae*.

CRE are a family of germs that are difficult to treat because they have high levels of resistance to antibiotics. They can cause deadly infections in your bloodstream, lungs and urinary tract, including pneumonia and meningitis.

A stakeholders meeting which consisted of Hospital Services Directorate, Tshwane District Microbiology team and National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) was convened on the 06 January 2020 to discuss challenges of overcrowding in the ward, staff shortage, infrastructure, inappropriate equipment storage and difficult in isolating infected infants.

The following measures have been taken to prevent further infections in the Neonatal Unit:

- A quality improvement plan has been created and implemented with immediate effect.
- Additional Professional Nurses have been deployed to assist at the Neonatal Unit.
- Approval to divert new admissions to the Kalafong Hospital and Steve Biko Academic Hospital has been granted in principle.
- Furthermore the external Infection Prevention and Control Audit to be conducted on the date to be provided by Provincial Quality Assurance Directorate.
- National Health Laboratory Services Infection Control Service to provide technical support assistance to audit Gauteng Department of Health Neonatal Units.
- NICD to allocate resources to develop a dashboard to monitor laboratory confirmed neonatal infections at facility level.

Tembisa Hospital like many other health facilities in the province is faced with the challenge of ever increasing demand for services. The 44-bedded Neonatal Unit often admits close to 90 patients. Whilst the Department is looking at improving the hospital infrastructure it is doing its utmost best to serve patients with respect and dignity.

The Department remains committed to improving patients' experience of care and the delivery of quality healthcare services.

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