

COVID-19 UPDATE

26 February , 2020

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), a division of the National Health Laboratory Service, is currently the only laboratory performing testing for SARS-CoV-2 in South Africa and can confirm that the country has not had a case of COVID-19 to date. The institute has tested a total of 121 people for SARS-CoV-2 of whom 77 met the case definition for persons under investigation (PUI). As of 26 February, all results have come out negative.

We continue to monitor trends of COVID-19 globally and in the African Region to improve our knowledge of the disease and to continually enhance our surveillance and response. We note the continued spread of COVID-19 in other parts of the world and the decrease in the number of transmissions reported in China. The African Region has so far recorded two positive cases of COVID-19. The first confirmed case in Africa was reported in Egypt on 14 February, however, the case has subsequently tested negative for COVID-19 on the *polymerase chain reaction* (PCR) test and is currently undergoing a 14-day observation period that is scheduled to end tomorrow, 27 February 2020. The second and most recent confirmed case has been reported in Algeria on 25 February 2020. This development is not surprising because Algeria is one of the 13 countries, which the World Health Organization (WHO) has

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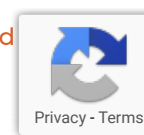


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The number of COVID-19 cases has increased by 243 as of 27 March 2020, bringing

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identified as a top priority for preparedness measures due to its direct links and a high volume of travel to China.

In addition to healthcare workers and the public, the NICD continues to expand reach and involvement to include the business sector and corporations across the country with regards to COVID-19 preparedness. An information session for businesses, corporations and occupational health practitioners will be held at the NICD on 3 March 2020. The information sharing session will ensure alignment and coordination pertaining to managing a possible case of COVID-19 in South Africa.

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