

b Leptospirosis outbreak update

As reported in the previous edition of the Communiqué, the NICD was requested by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) to assist with the investigation and management of leptospirosis that had been identified in two awaiting-trial prisoners in a facility in the Western Cape Province. The DCS made a decision to close the affected building in the facility in order to ensure that the rat infestation that led to the outbreak was properly addressed. The NICD Outbreak Response Unit and Centre for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases advised the DCS that symptom screening for leptospirosis be undertaken

amongst all prisoners, with immediate referral for investigation amongst those who are jaundiced, and that prisoners with non-specific symptoms have blood taken for leptospirosis PCR, and IgM antibody testing, and be treated empirically with doxycycline. Presently, screening is ongoing. A number of prisoners have been tested for leptospirosis, and a single additional case of leptospirosis has been identified, bringing to 3 the total number of cases.

Source: Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response; Centre for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases, NICD-NHLS