

c Malaria: update on elimination campaign

Malaria is endemic to three of South Africa’s nine provinces, with local transmission restricted to the low-altitude border regions of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. However, substantial numbers of imported cases are reported from non-endemic areas, particularly Gauteng Province.

South Africa committed itself to halting local malaria transmission within its borders by 2018. Objectives of the elimination strategy are to strengthen passive and active surveillance, improve capacity to coordinate and implement malaria interventions, appropriately educate the population about malaria, and reduce the human malaria parasite reservoir. The mainstay of malaria control continues to be indoor residual insecticide spraying to reduce mosquito vector density in transmission areas, while larviciding is conducted in some breeding sites.

Cellular phone-based reporting of malaria cases (MalariaConnect), implemented over the recent

malaria season to speed up malaria case investigation and response, has reduced malaria case notification time from a national average of six days for paper-based reporting to one day for MalariaConnect, with 86% of such reports reaching provincial health departments within 24 hours (data from Malaria Directorate, National Department of Health). Compared with 2015, there has been a 21% reduction in the number of notified cases in 2016 for the same reporting period (July and August) (Figure 5), probably related to the present drought. In the coming malaria season there will be increased scrutiny of identified foci of transmission, with active case finding using sensitive molecular methods to detect submicroscopic parasite carriers, and enhanced vector surveillance and control.

Source: Centre for Opportunistic, Tropical and Hospital Infections, NICD-NHLS; Malaria Control Programme, National Department of Health

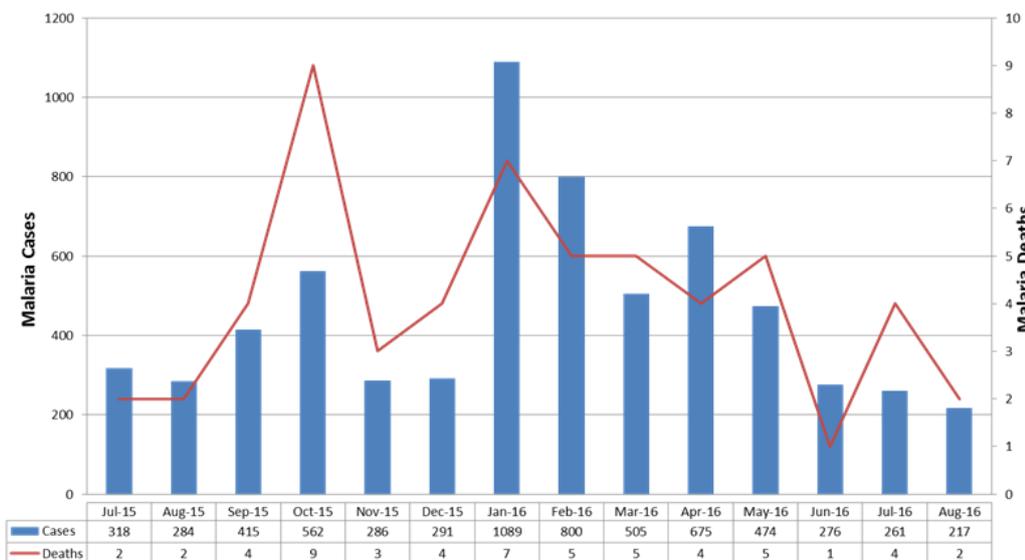


Figure 5. Malaria cases (blue bars) and deaths (red line) by month of the year from July 2015 until August 2016. data courtesy Malaria Control Programme, National Department of Health