



Communicable Disease Plan

2026 - 2027

DRAFT

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Communicable Disease Plan outlines a comprehensive framework for preventing, detecting, responding to, and recovering from outbreaks of communicable diseases within the Overstrand Municipality. Overstrand Municipality is located in the Overberg District of the Western Cape. The municipality serves a population of approximately 132 495 residents, with vulnerabilities including tourism influxes, seasonal migrations and socio-economic disparities that can exacerbate disease spread.

Communicable diseases covered include infectious conditions such as tuberculosis (TB), HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), respiratory illnesses (e.g. influenza, Covid-19 variants), waterborne diseases (e.g. cholera), and vector-borne diseases (e.g. malaria in rare cases). The plan aligns with national frameworks like the National Health Act (Act 61 of 2003), the Disaster Management Act (Act 57 of 2002) and the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) strategy promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and adopted in South Africa.

2. PURPOSE

To minimize the impact of communicable diseases on public health, economy, and social fabric through proactive measures, coordinated response, and community engagement.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To prevent and mitigate disease transmission
- Ensure early detection and surveillance
- Facilitate rapid and effective response
- Support recovery and resilience building
- Define clear roles for all stakeholders

4. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- **National Health Act (2003):** mandates surveillance, prevention, and control of communicable diseases, including notification of notifiable diseases.
- **Disaster Management Act (2002):** classifies health emergencies as disasters, requiring contingency planning, risk reduction, and multi-agency coordination.
- **National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB, and STIs (223 – 2028):** guides responses to priority diseases.
- **Overstrand Municipality Disaster Management Plan (2026-2027):** integrates health emergency services into municipal disaster response.
- **Overberg District Municipality Municipal Health Services:** provides core environmental health functions, including disease surveillance.
- **Provincial and National Guidelines:** including the National Health Emergency Response Operations Plan (NHEROP) and IDSR for surveillance.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT AND VULNERABILITIES

Overstrand faces risk from:

- High tourist traffic increasing exposure to imported diseases;
- Dense informal settlements with limited sanitation, heightening waterborne and respiratory disease risk;
- Prevalence of TB and HIV in the Western Cape;
- Climate factors supporting vectors like mosquitoes or rodents;
- Potential pandemics, seen with Covid-19

Annual risk assessments will be conducted by the Disaster Management team in collaboration with Overberg District Municipal Health Services.

6. PREVENTION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- **Public Education and Awareness:** campaigns on hygiene, vaccination, and safe practices, targeted at schools, communities, and tourists. Use media, community meetings, and digital platforms.
- **Vaccination programs:** coordinate with provincial health for routine immunizations and outbreak-specific drives (e.g. flu shots).
- **Environmental Controls:** regular water quality monitoring, waste management, vector control, and pollution reduction to prevent breeding grounds for diseases.
- **Infrastructure improvements:** upgrade sanitation, housing, and public facilities to reduce transmission risks.
- **Community engagement:** partner with NGOs for health promotion in vulnerable groups.

7. SURVEILLANCE AND EARLY DETECTION

- Implement IDSR for real-time monitoring of notifiable diseases
- Hotspot mapping and epidemiological data collection
- Routine inspections of premises (e.g. food outlets, schools) for health compliance
- Early warning systems linked to national surveillance via the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD)

8. RESPON PLAN

- **Activation triggers:** based on disease thresholds (e.g. confirmed cases exceeding norms) or national alerts
- **Incident Command Systems (ICS):** Establish a Joint Operations Centre (JOC for coordination)
- **Phases:**
 - Alert phase: enhanced surveillance and resource mobilization
 - Response phase: isolation / quarantine, contact tracing, treatment, and public restrictions (e.g. gatherings limits)
 - Escalation: request provincial / national support for mass testing or lockdowns.

- **Resource allocation:** stockpile PPE, testing kits, and medical supplies; activate emergency medical services

9. RECOVERY AND EVALUATION

- Post-outbreak: restore services, provide psychosocial support, and economic aid
- Conduct after-action reviews to update the plan
- Build resilience through training and simulations

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ROLE PLAYERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

This section highlights with the key actors involved, emphasizing collaborative efforts between municipal, district, provincial, and national levels. Overstrand Municipality focuses on coordination and disaster management, while Overberg District handles direct health services.

Overstrand Municipality

- **Assistant Chief: Disaster Management**
 - Supports the Chief in focusing on the management of potential emergency threats, including communicable disease risks
 - Assist in risk assessment, preparedness planning, and coordination of risk-reduction projects
 - Deputises in activating and managing the JOC during outbreaks
 - Oversees day-to-day disaster risk management activities and ensures integration with health services.
- **Chief: Fire, Rescue & Disaster Management**
 - leads overall disaster response integration
 - identifies hazards
 - activates the Incident Command Centre / JOC
 - coordinate awareness campaigns
 - ensures contingency plans are implemented
- **Director: Municipal Public Safety**
 - Compiles and maintains contingency plans
 - Identifies vulnerabilities
 - Oversees multi-agency coordination during outbreaks
- **Municipal Manager and Council**
 - Approves the plan
 - Allocates budgets
 - Ensures integration with Integrated Development Plan (IDP)
 - Communicates with residents

Overberg District Municipality (Municipal Health Services)

- **Environmental Health Practitioners (EHP)**
 - Conduct investigations into infectious disease cases
 - Perform routine inspections for food safety, water quality, waste management, and premises surveillance
 - Promote health and hygiene education
 - Collect and analyse epidemiological data

- Map disease hotspots
- Enforce compliance with health regulations
- Monitor vector control and pollution to prevent outbreaks
- **District Health Authority**
 - Oversees core functions like surveillance and prevention of communicable diseases (excluding immunizations)
 - Coordinates with local municipalities for data sharing and response
 - Issues compliance certificates and manages exhumations if disease related

Provincial Entities (Western Cape Government)

- **Western Cape Department of Health**
 - Provides clinical services, immunizations, and specialist support
 - Leads contact tracing and treatment
 - Supplies resources like ambulances and hospitals
- **Western Cape Emergency Medical Services (WCEMS)**
 - Responds to health incidents
 - Treats and transports patients
 - Establishes staging areas
 - Request additional resources
 - Reports to the JOC
 - Aligns contingency plans with municipal ones
- **Provincial Disaster Management Centre (PDMC)**
 - Offers higher-level coordination for escalated outbreaks
 - Facilitates resource sharing across districts

National Entities

- **National Department of Health (NdoH) and NCID**
 - Manages national surveillance (e.g. IDSR)
 - Declares notifiable diseases
 - Provides guidelines, testing, and outbreak teams
 - Supports research and data dissemination
- **Multisectoral National Outbreak Response Team**
 - Coordinates national-level response for major outbreaks

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Groups

- **NGOs (e.g. Red Cross, local health NGOs)**
 - Assist in community outreach, awareness campaigns, and relief distribution
 - Provide on-ground support during responses
 - Report to the JOC
- **Community leaders and ward committees**
 - Mobilize residents for compliance
 - Disseminate information
 - Identify vulnerable groups
 - Participate in education programs

Private Sector and Other Stakeholders

- **Healthcare Facilities (Private Clinics / Hospitals)**
 - Report cases
 - Provide treatment capacity
 - Collaborate on surveillance
- **Businesses (e.g. Tourism Operators, Food Premises)**
 - Implement hygiene protocols
 - Report suspected cases
 - Comply with inspections
- **Media**
 - Disseminates public information
 - Develops communication plans with the municipality
 - Avoids misinformation
- **Residents and visitors**
 - Adhere to guidelines (e.g. reporting symptoms, vaccination)
 - Participate in community surveillance

All stakeholders must participate in annual training, simulations, and plan reviews. Coordination occurs through the JOC during active response, with regular meetings in peacetime via the Disaster Management Advisory Forum.

This plan will be reviewed annually or post-incident, ensuring adaptability to emerging threat like new variants or climate-driven diseases.

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