NEW LOOK

health
Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2030 NDP

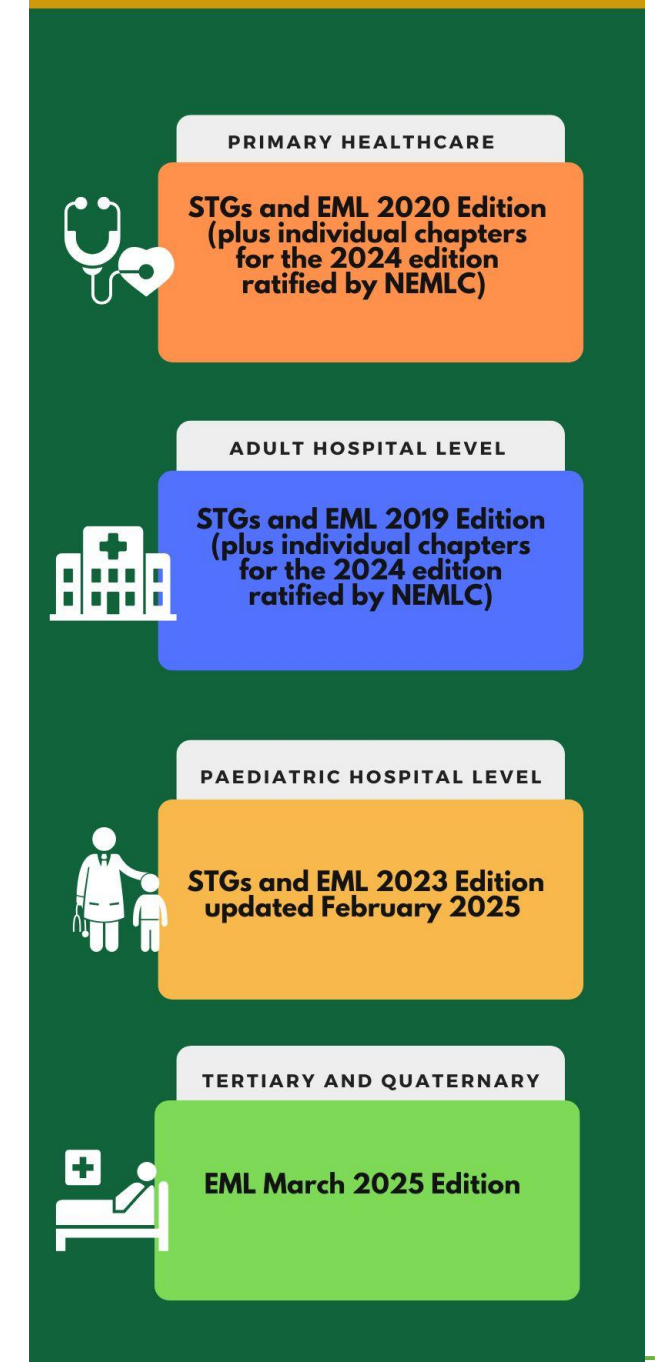
NATIONAL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST COMMITTEE (NEMLC) BULLETIN

FOR THE MEETING HELD ON THE 27 MARCH 2025: MEETING OUTCOMES FOR STAKEHOLDER DISSEMINATION

Accessible on the following platform:

National Health Insurance (NHI) Website: https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-comm/

The following are the latest editions of the Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) and Essential Medicines List (EML)



ACCESS TO THE STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

The following formats of the STGs and EML are accepted by the National Department of Health (NDoH):

- NHI website (latest version of the STGs and EML): The STGs and EML can be accessed using the following link: https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-stgs-eml/. Click on the relevant tab to access the STGs, EMLs and technical documents for each Level of Care. Refer to Annexure A for guidance on how to navigate the website and access the relevant documents.

- Knowledge Hub eLibrary on the link: https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/e-library. All the STGs, EMLs and related technical documents from the 2020-2024 review period have been moved to the NHI webpage on the NDoH website. The historic technical documents are in the process of being transferred. In the interim, if there are any historic technical documents you may require, please email the Essential Drugs Programme at SAEDP@health.gov.za.

- For webinar recordings aimed at strengthening implementation of the STGs and EML: https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinars.

- EMGuidance mobile application: To sign up, use the following link: http://onelink.to/sy896k.
Please note there may be a delay before updated documents are published on the NHI webpage to be transcribed onto the EMGuidance platform.

- COVID-19 rapid review reports are available on the NDoH website at: http://www.health.gov.za/covid-19-rapid-reviews/.

Take Note

The NEMLC Term of Office ended on the 07 April 2025. The appointment of the next NEMLC and Expert Review Committee (ERC) is currently underway.

ACCESS TO THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ESSENTIAL DRUGS PROGRAM (EDP) CIRCULARS

Circulars that are developed by the EDP are disseminated to stakeholders and uploaded on the Affordable Medicines webpage on the National Health Insurance (NHI) website. These circulars can be accessed on the following links:
NHI website: https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-comm/ and https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-stgs-eml/ (errata)
The following circulars were disseminated for the period March 2025 – April 2025:

- **Notice 2025/04/25/EDP/01**: Publication of the NEMLC approved updates to the PHC and AHL STGs and EML – 2024 edition (25 April 2025)
- **Circular no. CMU 07/2025:** Update to Circular CMU 04/2025: Interruption in the Supply of Betamethasone Disodium Phosphate 4mg/ml injection; 1ml from Pharma-Q (Pty) Ltd and the Supply of an Alternative Product from Organon SA (Pty) Ltd (23 April 2025).

Please email SAEDP (SAEDP@health.gov.za) if you would like to be added to the mailing list for EDP updates (circulars, chapter updates etc.)

UPDATES TO THE ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST AND THERAPEUTIC INTERCHANGE DATABASE

The EMLs and Therapeutic Interchange (TI) database have been removed from the current STGs and EML repositories as they are being updated to align with the medicine recommendations made during the 2020-2024 NEMLC review cycle and will be uploaded once updated versions are available. For any interim queries on the EML or TI database, kindly contact the EDP on the following email address: SAEDP@health.gov.za. The Therapeutic Interchange Policy may still be accessed at the following link: https://www.health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Therapeutic-Interchange-Policy_July2021_final.pdf

The following key therapeutic interchange updates have been approved by NEMLC and will be incorporated in updates to the database which are in progress. Please note that the relevant STGs will only be updated during the next review phase and published for implementation once finalised:

- **AH Chapter 18: Eye – Open Angle Glaucoma:** Changes have been made to the TI database regarding the management of open angle glaucoma. Amendments have been made to the list of prostaglandin analogues, beta blockers, alpha blockers and fixed combinations (prostaglandins with timolol).
- **PHC Chapter 17 and AH Chapter 16: Respiratory – Chronic Asthma:** Updates to the TI database have been approved by NEMLC to include Inhaled Corticosteroid (ICS)/formoterol inhalers used as maintenance and reliever therapy (MART) in the management of chronic asthma. Further guidance to be published once the relevant STGs have been updated in the next review phase.

NEW EDP WHATSAPP COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

For the latest updates to the EDP, join our WhatsApp channel below:
https://chat.whatsapp.com/GEN6bH1rKYVKSJ1bz34Ne9

OR

Scan the QR code





PRIMARY HEALTHCARE AND ADULT HOSPITAL LEVEL STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST



The following chapters and STGs have been reviewed and ratified for publication, with the respective NEMLC report and relevant medicine reviews, as part of the 2024 edition of the STGs and EML, following clinical editing:

- **PHC Level:**
  - PHC Chapter 15: Central Nervous System Conditions* – the following STGs have been updated:
    - Epileptic Seizures,
    - Status Epilepticus,
    - Epilepsy and
    - Febrile Seizures.
- **AH Level:**
  - AHL Chapter 14: Neurological Disorders* - the following STGs have been updated:
    - Epileptic Seizures,
    - Status Epilepticus,
    - Epilepsy.

**This work emanates from the holistic review of Epilepsy across levels of care and age group, conducted by the Epilepsy Subcommittee of NEMLC.*

DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED SINCE LAST NEMLC BULLETIN

- **PHC Level**

- PHC Chapter 7: Family Planning (Updated)

Medicine Review:
- DMPA SC Progestin-only Injection_Out of therapeutic class

Implementation Slide Decks:
- PHC Chapter 7: Family planning

- **AH Level**

-AH Chapter 19: Poisonings v2.0 – update to Section 19.18.2 Organophosphate poisoning (Chapter update to be uploaded in due course in line with approval of SAHPRA section 21 approval)

The following items were reviewed by NEMLC:

- **High strength atropine (100mg/10mL):** NEMLC approved the inclusion of a high strength atropine formulation (100mg/10mL) which is to be accessible through the SAHPRA Section 21 application process on the EML for the management of organophosphate poisonings. Section 19.18.2 Organophosphate poisoning of the AH Chapter 19: Poisonings has been amended to include guidance on the use of this formulation of atropine to better support clinical staff with the administration of the high doses of atropine usually required for the management of severe cases of organophosphate poisonings. Kindly note that the NDoH section 21 application is still underway, and the updated chapter will be uploaded in due course.
- **SGLT-2 inhibitors and DPP-4 inhibitors:** Approved by NEMLC for inclusion on the EML for the treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus. However please note it's inclusion in the relevant STGs will only be affected during the next review phase. This will also determine the future implementation.



Flucytosine is listed on the EML for Cryptococcal Meningitis at the Adult Hospital Level. It is encouraged that flucytosine be used together with liposomal Amphotericin B to reduce mortality. Uptake has been poor, and facilities are encouraged to use this item before expiry. For more information about the management of cryptococcal meningitis please refer to the webinar at https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/system/files/2025-04/Amphotericin%20B%20Deoxycholate%20and%20Liposomal%20Usage_Dr%20Gayle%20Tatz.pdf



PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL LEVEL STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

The completed Paediatric Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2023 edition, updated February 2025 is available for download on the NHI webpage on the following link: health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Paediatric-STGs-and-EML-2023-Edition_Updated-February-2025.pdf

- The following chapter and STGs have been reviewed and are currently undergoing clinical editing as part of the combined Epilepsy Subcommittee work:
    - Chapter 13: The Nervous System – the following STGs have been updated:
        - Epileptic Seizures,
        - Status Epilepticus,
        - Epilepsy and
        - Febrile Seizures.
- Errata to the Paediatric STGs and EML 2023 edition have been published and can be accessed on: https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-stgs-eml/
    - March 2025
    - October 2024
    - July 2024
    - January 2024
    - December 2023
- Presentations from the Paediatric Hospital Level STGs and EML 2023 edition webinar launch (held in September 2023) can be found on the Knowledge Hub Webinars tab at the following link: https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinars.



TERTIARY AND QUATERNARY HOSPITAL LEVEL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

The following items were reviewed by NEMLC:

- **Cross sex hormones use for gender dysphoria/gender incongruence –** Following an appeal regarding the use of cross sex hormones, with particular concern of use in children and adolescents; this area has been earmarked for evaluation together with the NDoH Programme. Additionally, a caution note will be added to the previously conducted review on gender dysphoria as reflected below.

Caution: there is limited evidence of long-term outcomes of use of cross-sex hormones in children and adolescents.
Note:
As evidence, perspectives, and terminology in the gender dysphoria/gender incongruence space continues to evolve, further work is in progress to reassess recommendations in this area.

Final reviews and supporting technical documents are published on the NHI website on the following link: https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-stgs-eml/



WEBINAR SERIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STGS AND EML

- Take note of the advertisements shared *via* the Knowledge Hub mailing list, EDP stakeholder mailing list and through the NDoH Facebook page, for the series of webinars to be held showcasing the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) process applied to the review of the STGs and EML and the updated chapters, medicine reviews and costings that have been published as part of the 2020-2024 review cycle of the PHC and Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML.

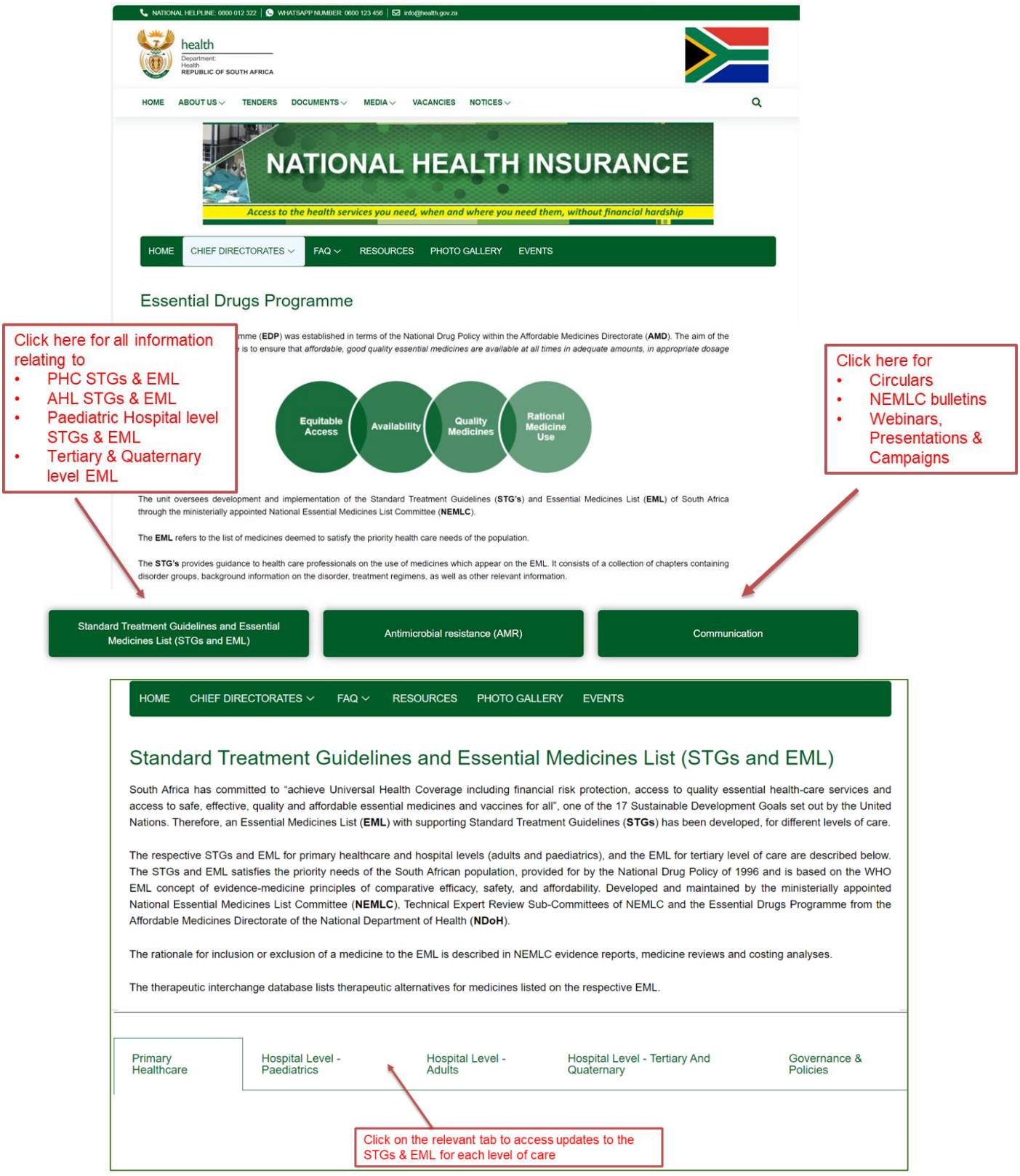
- Webinars presentations and recordings for the most recent series are available on the Knowledge Hub Webinars tab, on the following link: https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinars

Date	Webinar Title	Link
25 June 2024	Webinar 1: Health Technology Assessment	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/national-department-health-standard-treatment-guidelines-essential-medicines-list-session-1
16 July 2024	Webinar 2: Mental Health Conditions – updates to the STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/mental-health-updates-ndoh-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicine-list
30 July 2024	Webinar 3: Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Family Planning STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/obstetrics-and-gynaecology-and-family-planning-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential
13 August 2024	Webinar 4: Adult Critical Care – introduction to new STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/adult-critical-care-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list
27 August 2024	Webinar 5: Infections STGs and EML, and Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Report	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/infections-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list-and-antimicrobial
17 September 2024	Webinar 6: Emergencies and Injuries and Poisonings – Updates to the STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/emergencies-injuries-and-poisonings-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines
29 October 2024	Webinar 7: HIV and AIDS – Updates to the STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/hiv-and-aids-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list
26 November 2024	Webinar 8: Blood and Blood Forming Organs, Haemophilia – Updates to STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/blood-and-blood-forming-organs-and-haemophilia-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential
11 February 2025	Webinar 9: Cardiovascular Conditions – Updates to the STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/cardiovascular-conditions-standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list
08 April 2025	Webinar 10: Rational Medicine Use – Updates to the STGs and EML	https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinar/rational-medicine-use-rmu



Additional webinars to follow throughout 2025
Watch this space

Annexure A: Guide on how to access the Standard Treatment Guidelines and Essential Medicines List and related technical documents on the NHI website (https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-stgs-eml/)



The NEMLC Term of Office ended on the 07 April 2025. The appointment of the next NEMLC and Expert Review Committee (ERC) is currently underway.



Thank You!



The NDoH would like to commend the NEMLC and ERC members for their dedication, hard work, tireless contributions, and sincere commitment to ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare for all South Africans. The Committees' work has not only shaped the current landscape of healthcare in South Africa but also set the foundation for an even brighter, more equitable future for all.