

Nationally Notifiable Diseases: Case definitions 2008

Population Health Assessment and Surveillance

NS Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Conference

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Background & development process

- 2000 - last edition of nationally notifiable case definitions published
- 2005 to 2008
 - Collaboration across Canada to develop new case definitions
 - Federal and provincial/territorial input
- 2008 - revised definitions released
 - “Evergreen” document
 - In future, revision process for individual case definitions rather than the entire document



Reasons for changes at the federal level

- Developments in lab diagnosis
 - e.g. Detection of virus-specific DNA, RNA
- Changing epidemiology
 - e.g. *Haemophilus influenzae* b
- Better monitoring at federal level
 - “new” notifiables
 - e.g. listeriosis
- Improve consistency across country
 - Attempt to standardize case definitions across provinces

What is reported at federal level?

- For most diseases, only confirmed cases are notifiable to the federal level
 - there are exceptions
- Confirmed and probable cases
 - e.g. invasive meningococcal, Lyme, West Nile
- Confirmed, probable and suspect cases
 - e.g. anthrax
- Outbreaks
 - e.g. Norovirus



New nationally notifiable diseases

Not currently notifiable in Nova Scotia:

- Norovirus (outbreaks only)
- *Clostridium difficile*
- *Haemophilus influenzae* non-b invasive disease
- Varicella*

Presently notifiable in Nova Scotia:

- Invasive listeriosis
- Paralytic shellfish poisoning
- SARS
- West Nile virus



Examples of changes to case definitions

- Clinical changes:
 - e.g. Hepatitis A
 - Old: IgM positive with or without symptoms
 - New: IgM positive plus either acute illness or epidemiological-link to a lab-confirmed case
- Clarifications:
 - e.g. Group A strep
 - Old: Blood, CSF, pleural, pericardial and joint fluid (unspecified) considered acceptable sites
 - New: Above sites, plus deep tissue specimen taken during surgery, bone or joint fluid (excluding middle ear and superficial wound aspirates), peritoneal fluid

Examples of changes to case definitions

- Laboratory changes:
 - e.g. *H. influenzae* type b
 - Demonstration of antigen in CSF now makes case “probable”
 - Formerly this lab result would have classified the case as “confirmed”
 - Demonstration of *H. influenzae* DNA also included in probable case definition

Next Steps

HPP working group

- To implement the nationally notifiable diseases in Nova Scotia
 - In consultation with lab, clinicians, HPP informatics, public health practitioners, infection control
- Some diseases to be added to regulations
- Communication of information to various stakeholders



Next Steps

- National timeline not set
 - Implementation left to the provinces/territories
- Nova Scotia would like to see these changes integrated over the next year
- Stay tuned!



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Thank You



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