



**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH**

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

"Occupational Health Services for COVID-19 in the health sector"

Hospital COVID-19 OHS readiness for the 3rd wave in South African health facilities.

Presenter

Dr Nkululeko Thunzi





Scope

- Hospital COVID-19 OHS readiness for the 3rd wave in South African health facilities.
- HealthWISE COVID-19 risk assessment for the 3rd wave in South African health facilities
- Practical interventions for COVID-19 3rd wave in South African health facilities



Introduction

Following the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic, as part of the protection of health workers (HWs), employers in the health sector are expected to activate their infection prevention and control (IPC), and OHS systems in order to protect HWs from SARS-CoV-2 infection while at work.



Introduction...

- There have been concerns about OHS in health facilities,
 - OHS organization and implementation has been in suboptimal levels in Southern Africa (Moyo et al)
- The COVID-19 pandemic has shown some gaps in the health and safety of HWs with respect to prevention of COVID-19 infections and protection of HWs
 - Conducting risk assessments
 - Provision of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - Care and support for affected and infected health workers
 - Lack of appropriate psychosocial support
 - Lack of governance structures such as Health and Safety Committees as per the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), 85 OF 1993.



Methods

- Study design
 - Cross sectional survey
- Population and setting
 - 4 tertiary hospitals in 2 provinces in South Africa
 - Population (OHS Coordinators/Nurses/managers)
 - The hospitals that were assessed had a total number of workers of 14,743

Province 1

- Hospital A: 5300
- Hospital B: 6500

Province 2

- Hospital C: 1043
- Hospital D: 1200

- Sampling
 - Convenience sampling
- Data collection tools
 - Structured questionnaire

Results

Table 1: Policy and governance

	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Does the hospital have occupational health and safety policy?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the hospital have standard operating procedure?	Yes	No	No	Yes
To whom does the occupational health department report to in the organogram?	CEO	Unknown	CEO	CEO
Frequency of communication from the hospital OHS / IPC concerning COVID-19?	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Weekly

Results

Table 2: Health and Safety Committees

	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Does the hospital have an agreement with organized labour on a nomination procedure for health and safety representatives	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Does the hospital have an adequate number of health and safety representatives to employees?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
What is the ratio of HSR to employees	1:39	1:25	1:25	1:27
Do health and Safety Representative have appointment letter?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Have the Health and Safety Representative been trained on their duties?	Yes	No	No	Yes
What number of health and safety representatives trained?	Unknown	Unknown	None	20
Is there a health and safety committee appointed in writing in the hospital?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Are there at least three monthly health and safety committee meetings with meeting minutes?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is there a chairperson of the health and safety committee appointed in writing?	No	No	No	Yes

Results

Table 3: Risk Assessment

	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Does the hospital have a Health Risk Assessment in the last 2 years as per the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was the Health Risk Assessment amended to include Covid19?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Proof of evidence (report) of the Health Risk Assessment?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is the Health Risk Assessment approved by the CEO	Yes	No	No	Yes
Is the Health Risk Assessment approved by the HSC	Yes	Yes	No	No
Is the Health Risk Assessment approved by the organised labour	No	No	No	No
Are there summaries of the health risk assessment in each working area within the last 2 years?	No	No	Yes	Yes
Are there Occupational Risk Exposure Profiles for different job categories and profiles?	Yes	No	No	Yes

Results

Table 4: Medical Surveillance

	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Is there an active risk based medical surveillance programme at the hospital?	Yes	No	No	Yes
Percentage of workers in the hospital who have had medical surveillance in the past year?	7.5%	1.5%	15.7%	18.6%
Has the hospital conducted an individual risk assessment to identify Covid-19 vulnerable workers?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Are health workers screened for COVID-19 related symptoms before each shift?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Results

Table 5: OHS training in health facilities

	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Did the health workers receive training on how to protect themselves from occupational hazards?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was the nature of the HBA in-person training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was the nature of the HBA training via email communication	No	No	Yes	No
Was the nature of the HBA training online (Zoom, MS teams, etc)	No	Yes	Yes	No
Was the nature of the HBA training using pamphlets and posters	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Was the nature of the HBA training using other means	No	No	Yes	No
Was any training conducted on the Regulations for Hazardous Biological Agents during the last 12 months?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Proof of evidence that training was done	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was there any recent training on hospital infection prevention and control relevant to COVID-19 control?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are health workers trained to perform respirator fit testing?	No	Yes	No	No
Are health workers trained on donning and doffing of PPE?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Results

Table 6: Ventilation

	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Does the hospital have adequate natural ventilation overall?	No	Yes	No	Yes
Does the hospital have mechanical ventilation systems?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Is the mechanical ventilation system if present functional?	Yes	N/A	No	Yes
Were there functional fans in place?	No	No	No	No
Were there functional air conditioners in place?	No	Yes	No	Yes
Were there functional air extractors in place ?	No	No	No	Yes

Results

Table 7: PPE

Does the hospital provide the following PPE	Province 1		Province 2	
	Hospital A	Hospital B	Hospital C	Hospital D
Surgical masks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N95 respirators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gloves – latex	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gloves – others	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Over garments	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Face shield	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disposable apron	No	No	Yes	Yes
Caps (Hair protection)	No	No	Yes	Yes
Goggles	No	No	No	Yes
Is there a system for allocating PPE to staff in each unit?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are there different sizes of PPE available?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is there a respirator fit testing programme in the hospital?	No	Yes	No	Yes



Discussion

- Health and safety committees were in place in all hospitals even though in most the hospital they did not have appointment letters for the chairperson of the committees and HSR not trained on their duties in the majority of hospitals.
- Health risk assessments are done across all facilities, the challenge is approval by CEO and HSC, none of the hospitals have organised labour approval.
- Ventilation is still a big challenge in most of the facilities even though we are in the 3rd wave of the pandemic seemingly few interventions were done to improve ventilation since the passed waves of infections.
- PPE provision was good across all facilities and provinces.



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Thank you