

SURVEILLANCE CASE DEFINITIONS FOR NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS

Regardless of the source of information, all reports of notifiable disease must be assessed against the surveillance case definition prior to reporting. Case definitions for all notifiable conditions in Nova Scotia are included in this document, as are the associated surveillance procedures.

The surveillance case definitions included in this document differ in their use of clinical, laboratory, and epidemiologic criteria to define cases. Some clinical syndromes do not have confirmatory laboratory tests; however, laboratory evidence may be one component of a clinical definition (e.g. toxic-shock syndrome for invasive Group A Streptococcal infections). Most case definitions include a brief clinical description; however, unless this description is explicitly cited in the case classification section, it is included only as background information.

Some diseases require laboratory confirmation for diagnosis regardless of clinical symptoms, whereas others are diagnosed based on epidemiologic data. Many case definitions for the childhood vaccine-preventable diseases and foodborne diseases include epidemiologic criteria (e.g. exposure to probable or confirmed cases of disease). In some instances, the anatomic site of infection may be important; for example, sterile site infections may be notifiable, whereas non-sterile sites may not.

The list of notifiable diseases reportable to the Public Health Agency of Canada changes periodically (<http://dsol-smed.phac-aspc.gc.ca/dsol-smed/ndis/list-eng.php>). Diseases may be added to the list as new pathogens emerge or deleted as their incidence declines. As knowledge increases and diagnostic technology improves, some definitions will change to reflect those trends. Thus, future revisions can be expected. The DHW Surveillance Team will advise the DHAs on any changes to case definitions.

Please Note: Consultation with the lab may be necessary to determine the appropriate collection of samples and the range of testing services available in the province as these case definitions are from the National Surveillance Case Definitions.