

NATIONAL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST COMMITTEE (NEMLC) BULLETIN FOR THE MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2023: MEETING OUTCOMES FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION

ACCESS TO STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

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

- **Primary Healthcare:** STGs and EML 2020 Edition (plus updated chapters ratified by NEMLC)
- **Adult Hospital Level:** STGs and EML 2019 Edition (plus updated chapters ratified by NEMLC)
- **Paediatric Hospital Level:** STGs and EML 2023 Edition
- **Tertiary and Quaternary:** EML November 2023 Edition

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

- **Knowledge Hub (most updated version of the STGs and EML):** eLibrary on the link: <https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/e-library>. Refer to Annexure A on page 6 and 7 for guidance on how to access STGs and EML and related technical documents on the Knowledge Hub.

Keywords:

Resource	Keywords to use in the Search bar	Notes: <i>Folder contents outlined below – constantly updated</i>
Primary Healthcare (PHC) Level, 2020 <i>(plus updated chapters ratified by NEMLC, Medicine Reviews, Costing Reports and Implementation slides)</i>	Primary Healthcare, PHC, Standard Treatment Guidelines, STGs, Essential Medicines List, EML	Contains complete PDF of 2020 edition, new chapters already reviewed and ratified for the 2024 edition (with supporting NEMLC reports) which will be replacing chapters from the 2020 edition and form part of the 2024 edition, medicine reviews, costing reports, implementation slides, therapeutic interchange database, EML based on 2020 edition of the STGs & EML
Hospital Level – Paediatrics, 2023 <i>(plus updated Chapters ratified by NEMLC, Errata, Medicine Reviews and Costing Reports)</i>	Hospital Level, Hospital, Paediatric, Standard Treatment Guidelines, STGs, Essential Medicines List, EML, Medicine Reviews, Costing Reports	Complete PDF of the 2023 edition, updated chapters, individual chapters for the 2023 edition and errata Medicine reviews and costing reports in a separate folder
Hospital Level – Adults, 2019 <i>(plus updated Chapters ratified by NEMLC, Errata, etc.)</i>	Hospital Level, Hospital, Adult, Standard Treatment Guidelines, STGs, Essential Medicines List, EML, Medicine Reviews, Costing Reports	Contains complete PDF of the 2019 edition, new chapters (with supporting NEMLC reports) already reviewed and ratified for the 2024 edition replacing chapters from the

			2020 edition and form part of the 2024 edition, therapeutic interchange database, notices of errata from the 2019 edition, EML based on the 2019 edition of the STGs & EML
Tertiary and Quaternary Level, November 2023	Hospital Level, Hospital, Tertiary & Quaternary, Tertiary, Quaternary, Medicine Recommendations, Medicine Reviews, Costing Reports		2022 and 2023 medicine reviews, costing reports, latest Tertiary and Quaternary EML 2017 – 2021 medicine reviews and costing documents in separate folders but same key words
Health Technology Assessment	Health Technology Assessment, Health Technology, HTA, Essential Medicines List		HTA Methods Guide, HTA Methods Guide Templates
Medicine Reviews and Costing Reports	Medicine reviews, reviews, costing reports, costing		Different folders for Paediatrics, Adult and Tertiary & Quaternary Contains all medicine reviews and costing reports per level of care, except PHC level
Notice for Comment	Notice for Comment, Notice Comment, PHC, Adult, Paediatric, Hospital Level, STGs, EML		Current notices for all levels of care – these notices are removed once comment period is closed
National Essential Medicines List Committee	NEMLC, National Essential, Essential Medicines, Committee		Member photos & short biographies, policies, terms of reference, bulletins
Affordable Medicines Circulars	Affordable Medicines Circulars, Affordable Medicines, Circulars		2022 and 2023 circulars

- **EMGuidance mobile application:** To sign up, click on the link: <http://onelink.to/sy896k>
Please note there may be a lag time for any updated documents on Knowledge Hub to be transcribed onto the EMGuidance platform.

The most current versions of the COVID-19 rapid review reports are still available on the **NDoH website** at: <http://www.health.gov.za/covid-19-rapid-reviews/>

ACCESS TO CIRCULARS FROM THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Circulars that are developed by the Essential Drugs Programme (EDP) are disseminated to EDP stakeholders and uploaded on the Knowledge Hub. The EDP Knowledge Hub section is currently being restructured to contain all EDP related information under one URL. When the URL is live, a summary of what is available together with the link will be shared with all EDP stakeholders.

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

The following circulars/documents were disseminated from November 2023 to January 2024:

- Notice: Intravenous Tranexamic Acid approved for Inclusion in the PHC STGs and EML for the Indication of Postpartum Haemorrhage (PPH) – 10 December 2023
- Notice: Streptokinase 1 500 000 IU Injection Discontinuation – 10 December 2023
- Notice for Comment: Notice of Request for Comment on the STGs and EML for PHC and Adult Hospital (AH) Level of Care. PHC Chapter 18: Eye Conditions and AH Chapter 2: BBFO and AH Chapter 18; Eye Disorders – 08 December 2023.
- Notice for Comment: Notice of Request for Comment on the Haemophilia STGs and EML for Paediatric and Adult Hospital Level – 08 December 2023
- Erratum to the Paediatric Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2023, 5th edition – 01 December 2023
- Reminder: Notice: Notice of Application for Appointment to the National Ministerial Advisory Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance – 21 September 2023. Click here to apply: [MAC-AMR Application Form \(google.com\)](#)

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE (PHC) AND ADULT HOSPITAL LEVEL (AH) STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

- The following chapters have been reviewed and *ratified for publication*, with the respective NEMLC report and relevant medicine review(s), following clinical editing:
 - **PHC Chapter 20: Pain**
 - **PHC Chapter 22: Medicines Used for Palliative Care**
 - **AH Chapter 24: Medicines Used for Palliative Care**
 - **AH Chapter 26: Pain**
- The following chapters have been reviewed and *ratified for external comment*, with the respective NEMLC reports and relevant medicine review(s). The commenting period closed on **08 January 2024**.
 - **PHC Chapter 18: Eye Conditions**
 - **AH Chapter 2: Blood and Blood Forming Organs (BBFO)***
 - **AH Chapter 18: Eye Disorders**

**Please note: The STG on the management of venous thromboembolism has been separated into Section 2.8.1 Venous thromboembolism – prophylaxis and Section 2.8.2 Venous thromboembolism – acute treatment.*

- The following items were reviewed by NEMLC:
 - **Levetiracetam** – Levetiracetam was discussed with regard to management of paediatric patients already initiated on levetiracetam transitioning into adolescent and adult care; and ongoing safety concerns for the use of sodium valproate in pregnancy, particularly in HIV positive patients who cannot use carbamazepine. A recommendation is being finalised.
 - **Tranexamic Acid injection (TXA IV) Review for postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) at PHC Level (PHC Chapter 06: Obstetrics & Gynaecology)** – Following the publication of the updated PHC Chapter 6: Obstetrics & Gynaecology (2020-23) and the accompanying TXA IV review, an external query was received regarding the interpretation of the measurement of the primary outcome, PPH in the evidence summary. Following deliberation of the external query, the risk of bias for measurement of the outcome of postpartum haemorrhage was revised in the evidence summary. The review update does not impact the previously published NEMLC approved STG recommendation for inclusion of TXA IV to the PHC level of care. NEMLC recommended ratification of the proposed changes for republication of the evidence summary.

- **Adaptation of the NICE Guideline: “Venous Thromboembolism in over 16s” for Patients Undergoing Total Hip Arthroplasty or Total Knee Arthroplasty Requiring Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis”** – Recommendations for VTE prophylaxis have been adapted from the NICE guideline for inclusion in the AH Chapter 2 BBFO as part of the guidance on the management of VTE. NEMLC supported the recommendation for the use of rivaroxaban, followed by aspirin, for VTE prophylaxis in elective hip and knee arthroplasty patients and the updated chapter was *ratified for external comment*.
- **Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOACS) for venous thromboembolism (VTE) Prophylaxis (AH Chapter 2: BBFO) – Review Update** – The evidence summary and budget impact analysis on the use of DOACs for VTE prophylaxis has been updated in response to the price reduction of rivaroxaban. NEMLC supported the Expert Review Committee’s (ERC) recommendation on the use of rivaroxaban for the prevention of VTE in medically ill, hospitalised, adult patients and for adult patients who require VTE prophylaxis post total hip or total knee arthroplasty. This recommendation excludes the subset of patients (*hospitalised patients with trauma-related operative or non-operative extremity fractures or trauma-related pelvic or acetabular fractures at risk of VTE*) in whom aspirin is recommended as detailed in the previous bulletin (12 October 2023). Amendments to the STG for the management of VTE were ratified for external comment.
- **Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOACS) for the treatment of venous thromboembolism (VTE) (AH Chapter 2: BBFO) – Review Update** – The previously ratified budget impact analysis (BIA) and evidence review on the use of DOACS for the treatment of VTE were revised following a reduction in the price of rivaroxaban. The NEMLC ratified the recommendation for the use of rivaroxaban for the treatment of VTE and the updated chapter was approved for external comment.
- **Liposomal Amphotericin B for Cryptococcal Meningitis (AH Chapter 10: HIV)** – The evidence review and economic analysis as previously ratified by the NEMLC on 23 June 2022 has been updated in response to the announcement of a price reduction of liposomal amphotericin B, (public sector price of R600 per 50mg vial). The Committee supported the recommendation for the use of liposomal amphotericin B for treating patients with cryptococcal meningitis, based on both cost and safety.
- **Mitomycin C (MMC) and 5-Fluorouracil (5-FU) for Glaucoma (AH Chapter 18: Eye Disorders)** – An evidence review on the use of the antimetabolites MMC and 5-FU for intraoperative sponge application during trabeculectomy in glaucoma patients, was presented to the Committee for discussion. The Committee ratified the ERC’s recommendation that MMC be added to the EML for adult patients with glaucoma undergoing trabeculectomy.
- **Disease Modifying Antirheumatic Drugs (DMARDs) for the management of severe uveitis (AH Chapter 18: Eye Disorders)** – The Committee ratified the ERC’s recommendation that methotrexate be added to the EML for the management of non-infectious posterior uveitis or panuveitis in patients who are refractory to corticosteroids or who require ongoing corticosteroids to maintain inflammation control. Azathioprine will be added to the therapeutic interchange database as an alternative to methotrexate for this indication.

PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL LEVEL STANDARD TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

- A number of updates to the recently published Paediatric STGs and EML, 2023 edition, have been identified. NEMLC ratified these updates, and the erratum and updated PDF have been circulated and are available on the Knowledge Hub eLibrary on the following folder: **Hospital Level (Paediatric) Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) and Essential Medicines List (EML) 5th Edition - 2023**
- The updated complete Paediatric Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2023 edition is available for download on the Knowledge Hub platform on this link: <https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/content/standard-treatment-guidelines-and-essential-medicines-list>.

- Presentations from the Paediatric Hospital Level STGs and EML 2023 edition launch webinar series (held in September 2023) can be found on the Knowledge Hub Webinars tab or on the following link: <https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/webinars>.

TERTIARY AND QUATERNARY HOSPITAL LEVEL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST

- The following has been reviewed and *ratified for publication*, with the respective NEMLC report:
Deferasirox film-coated tablets – Deferasirox was approved as an oral alternative to deferoxamine in the management of transfusional iron overload in 2016, and at this time only dispersible tablets were available. Subsequently, film-coated tablets have become available, and a motivation for consideration for inclusion of this formulation was received. It was found that from the available evidence, film-coated deferasirox was no worse than the dispersible deferasirox formulation. The NEMLC recommended that film-coated and dispersible deferasirox tablets be considered comparable, and either formulation can be procured for the treatment of transfusional overload (oral alternative to deferoxamine). The dispersible formulation will be needed for very small children who are unable to swallow a tablet.

Final reports are published on the Knowledge Hub's eLibrary, refer to Annexure A below for a guide on how to access the documents on the Knowledge Hub platform.

HAEMOPHILIA SUBCOMMITTEE OF NEMLC

The following documents were presented for consideration by NEMLC:

- **Haemophilia STGs and EML for the Paediatric and Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML** – The updated Adult and Paediatric Hospital Level, Haemophilia STGs and EML (from the Blood and Blood Forming Organ Chapters) were presented for consideration. The primary update was the inclusion of Factor VIII prophylaxis for haemophilia A, as approved by NEMLC in July 2023. NEMLC recommended that these documents be ratified for *external comment*. The commenting period closed on **8 January 2024**.

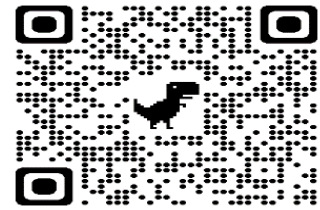
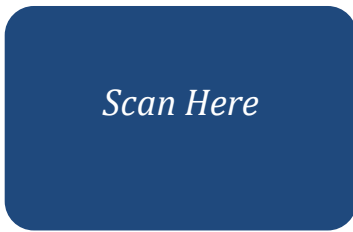
Clinicians and provinces are requested to additionally comment on whether data on patients initiated on factor VIII prophylaxis could be kept and reported to the NDoH for monitoring purposes.

- **Medicine review: Emicizumab for prophylaxis in haemophilia A with inhibitors** – The costing component for the review on use of emicizumab for haemophilia A with inhibitors prophylaxis. A final recommendation has not yet been made, and further deliberations will be undertaken.

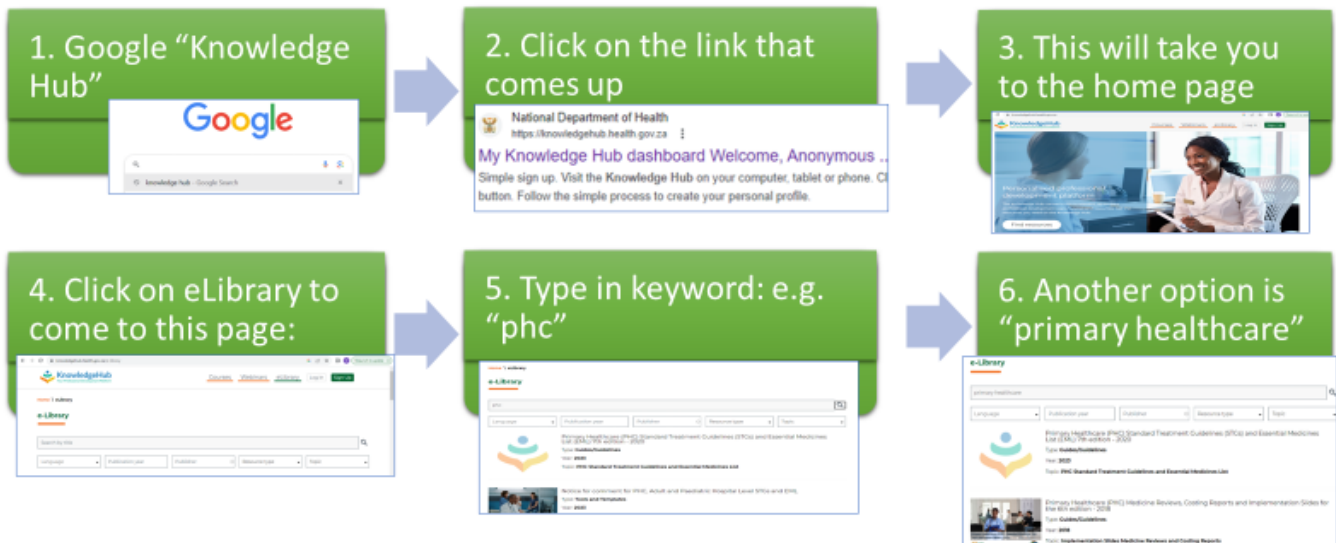
OTHER MATTERS DISCUSSED

- **Extemporaneous Preparations – Formula for Morphine Solution** – The appendix was reviewed following correction of the historical error on the concentration of morphine solution. A concern was raised by palliative care specialists that sorbitol is not ideal for making up morphine solution due to the high sugar content; and that a non-sorbitol containing formulation needs to be explored. The Committee is currently in deliberations about an alternative non-sorbitol containing formula for morphine solution.

Guide on how to access the Standard Treatment Guidelines and Essential Medicines List and related technical documents on Knowledge Hub

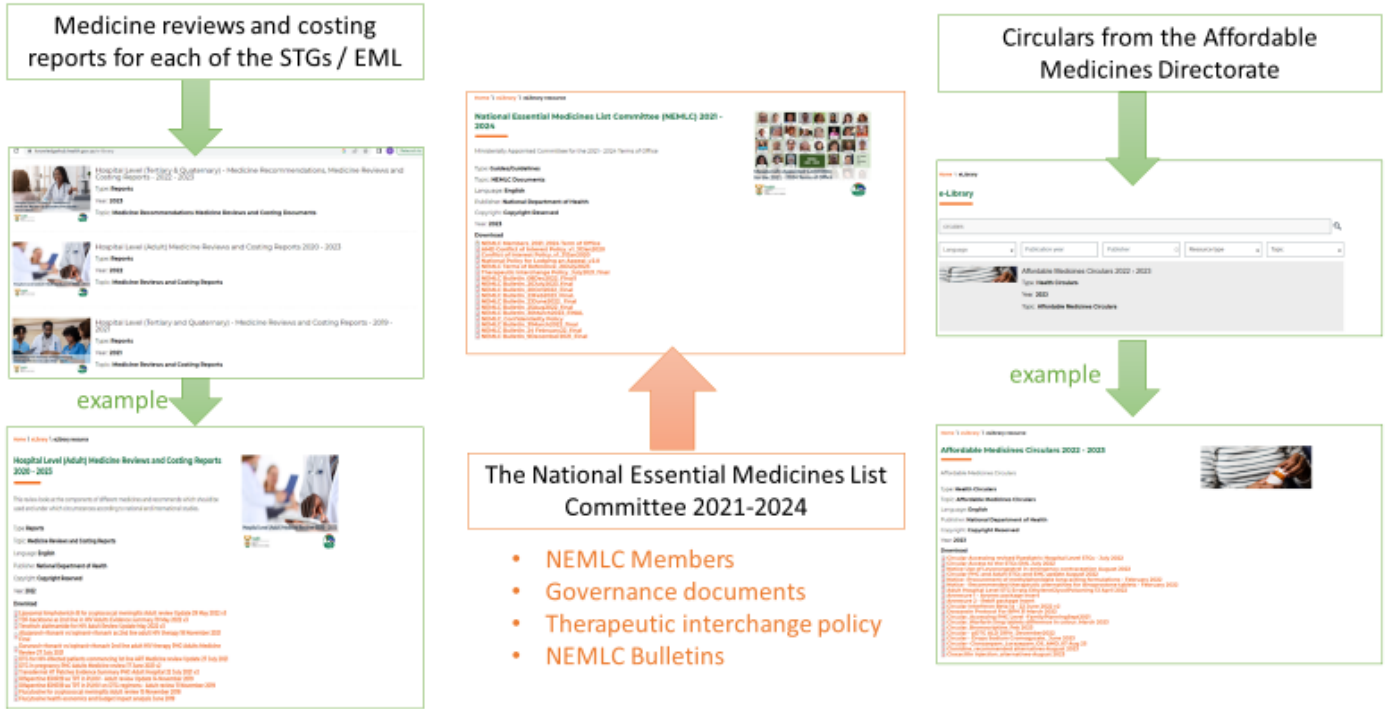


OR



Other keywords that you can use:
'hospital level'; 'paediatric'; 'adult'; 'tertiary';
'notice for comment'

What else is available on KnowledgeHub?



How the STGs/EML are presented on KnowledgeHub

