



# HIGHER HEALTH

Higher Education and Training  
Health, Wellness and Development Centre

## Protocol on Screening, Testing & Linkage to Care for COVID-19

## Programme within the Post School Education & Training (PSET)

### Sector

7 May 2020

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## Preamble

The severity and rapidly expanding epidemic of COVID-19 has placed significant need for a Screening, Testing, Contact Tracing, Self-Isolation, and Linkage to Care protocol as a guideline for interventions at each campus. HIGHER HEALTH is supporting DHET and all the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector institutions, which includes Universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges, Community Education and Training (CET) Colleges, and the Skill Sub Sector Centres in their efforts to combat COVID-19.

HIGHER HEALTH will be supporting campus efforts to ramp up the Education of all Students and Staff on COVID-19 as well as COVID-19 Screening, Testing, and Linkage to Care support for all students and staff entering the campuses post lockdown. Further to this, HIGHER HEALTH is also putting additional infrastructure both in the form of Daily Screening for all Students and Staff entering our campuses as well as additional infrastructure towards increasing essential clinical and psycho-social health services towards increasing Testing, care and support services for all affected students and staff, especially who will be screened positive or considered high risk for COVID-19. This being a notifiable disease, quick isolation of students and staff that are screened and tested positive is critical towards limiting further spread. HIGHER HEALTH is working very closely with the National, Provincial, and District Department of Health, NICD, CDC, and other support services towards an integrated model of care and support for all our Students and Staff. HIGHER HEALTH has developed this protocol to assist and guide institutional management on operational measures available for Screening, Testing, Self-Isolation, Contact Tracing and Linkage to care. This protocol contains guidance on options to be considered for the setting up of different options for screening for COVID-19 as well as guidance on Testing, Contact Tracing, Self-Isolation, and Linkage to Care.

## Key Communication Principle – Stay at home if symptomatic

Each institution must develop appropriate protocols for daily COVID-19 symptom screening for staff and students. This will need to include the following considerations:

- a. The most important principle is that institutions should try to ensure that students and staff with **ANY COVID-19** symptoms should not come to the institutions. They should stay at home.
  - Symptomatic persons can acquire and transmit to others on the way to and from institutions as well as at institutions.
- b. The current laboratory tests are cumbersome, time-consuming and no adequate rapid point-of-care test is available that can adequately diagnose the virus.

- c. Most SARS-CoV-2 infections are asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic, and therefore cannot be detected by symptom screening.
- d. A very important guidance is that every institution should try to ensure that all staff and students wear cloth masks all the time both on the way to, and from, the institution as well as within the institution. Management always needs to impose strict measures towards enforcing the mandatory wearing of cloth masks.
- e. Social distancing of 2 meters between students, staff, and any other individuals needs to be strictly adhered to at any given time within our campuses. Institutions should try to ensure that there is never hand-to-hand contact between any students and staff.
- f. Communication about staying at home when symptomatic is critical.
  - Any person who arrives at an institution with COVID-19 symptoms is a failure of communications.
  - Those individuals that come to institutions with COVID-19 symptoms will be referred to government testing sites and, other linkages to care sites for COVID-19.

### **Practical Considerations**

Each PSET institution will have to develop institution-specific processes, based on the following considerations:

- a. Some institutions have a single campus while others have many.
- b. Institutions may have a single-entry point or multiple entry points. Due to the exercise being undertaken, there must be restrictions at each of these entry points.
- c. All staff, students, service providers, or any other individual entering the institutions, need to be screened daily.
- d. Certain categories of institutions may have many students off-campus, such as those on project/research work or who have been allocated to industry partners for experience/internship, and these students should follow any institution workplace protocols on COVID-19.
- e. All screening needs to be linked to SARS-CoV-2 testing. This protocol guides each institution to put systems in place for determining where those individuals with symptoms are sent for testing and care.

- f. Where possible, all screening should be done using the HIGHER HEALTH- Department of Health (DOH) Integrated Digital Solution (HealthCheck). The public health systems then need to ensure that persons are traced and tested.
- g. Students and staff need to know where to go for testing if they are symptomatic. HIGHER HEALTH, in support from Department of Health (DOH) will share a list of the nearest COVID-19 testing facilities, isolation facilities, and quarantine centres to all the campuses for guidance.
- h. The wearing of cloth face masks is now public policy and all staff and students should always wear these when in public, when commuting to and from campus on public or private transport, at campuses or even when meeting elderly or immune-compromised people at homes.

### **Different Options for Screening**

Each institution in support with HIGHER HEALTH can decide on which forms of screening they wish to institute. It is highly recommended that each institution institute Option 1 below PLUS a selection of the others. All screening options are linked to the Integrated Government District Data Systems that track those with symptoms and link them to testing, Self-isolation, and care.

### **Option 1 – Technology-Based- HIGHER HEALTH INTEGRATED DIGITAL COVID19 SCREENING SYSTEM: “HEALTHCHECK”**

Workplace and study environments, including PSET institutions across the world, are looking to leverage technology to screen staff and students for symptoms BEFORE they get to their place of work/study. HIGHER HEALTH, in support with DHET has developed a Digital Screening Assessment and mapping tool known as HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”), which is integrated with the National Department of Health’s (NDOH) official screening tool that allows for early detection, mapping, and management of COVID-19 cases using DATA FREE: USSD, WhatsApp and a simple web-based form which is available for all students and staff. HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) works in four easy steps:

**Step 1: Daily Screening.** Staff and students will be encouraged to do a daily COVID-19 screening on the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) through their channel of choice.

**Step 2: Risk Classification.** Once the check has been completed, actions are suggested for those screened positive based on NICD and NDOH guidelines in three categories of support:

- a. Self-Isolate
- b. Test
- c. Seek Emergency Care

**Step 3: Verification.** Before entering campus, students and staff must show that they have completed the daily HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) and are clear to enter the campus.

**Step 4: Follow up.** Students and staff who have been classified as moderate or high risk, will be linked to the NDOH tracking and tracing process immediately.

These steps are highlighted in the image below:

### Step 1 Daily Screening

Staff and Students will be encouraged to do a daily HealthCheck through their channel of choice. Alternatively they will be screened before entering campus.



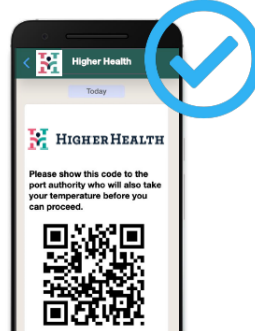
### Step 2 Risk Classification

Once the check has been completed, actions are suggested based on NICD and NDOH guidelines.

- SELF ISOLATE
- TEST
- SEEK EMERGENCY CARE

### Step 3 Verification

Before entering campus, students and staff must show that they have completed the daily HealthCheck and are cleared to continue onto campus.



### Step 4 Follow Up

For those students and staff who have been classified as moderate or high risk, they will be entered into the NDOH tracking and tracing process.

The HIGHER HEALTH and National DOH Integrated Digital Solution for COVID-19 is a multichannel, multi-language, data-generating and NDOH Verified tool accessed on a mobile phone as explained below:

- a. **Multi-Channel:** HealthCheck will be made available on **WhatsApp**, **webform** ([www.higherhealth.ac.za](http://www.higherhealth.ac.za)) and zero-rate **USSD** to ensure access for all staff and students

- b. **Multi-language:** HealthCheck will be made available in multiple languages, starting with **isiZulu, isiXhosa, SeSotho, Afrikaans and English**
- c. **Data generation:** The data collected using HealthCheck (including **age, gender and location**) will be mapped to individual campuses, using a dashboard system, allowing for early detection of hot spots and to assist the Institution, DHET and HIGHER HEALTH with decision making
- d. **NDOH Verified:** The HealthCheck algorithm has been approved by the National Department of Health as an official self-screening tool. Besides, the system links to the national tracking and tracing program of the NDOH.

These features are highlighted in the image below:



#### **MULTI-CHANNEL**

HealthCheck will be made available on **WhatsApp**, a zero-rated webform and zero-rated **USSD** line to ensure access for all Staff and Students



#### **MULTI-LANGUAGE**

HealthCheck will be made available in multiple languages, starting with **English** for launch and then, in subsequent phases, rolled out to **isiZulu, isiXhosa, SeSotho and Afrikaans**.



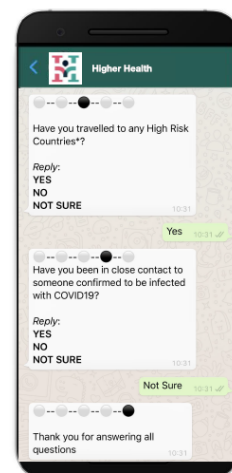
#### **DATA GENERATION**

The data collected using HealthCheck (including **age, gender and location**) will be mapped to individual campuses, allowing for detection of hot spots and to assist HIGHER HEALTH in decision making



#### **NDOH VERIFIED**

The HealthCheck algorithm has been approved by the National Department of Health as the official self screening tool. In addition, the system links to the national tracking and tracing programme of the NDOH



#### **Advantages of Option 1:**

- a. This approach aligns with the National, Provincial, and District Department of Health databases, thus linking systems to the national and district tracking and tracing program of the DOH and NICD. This can guide both the districts and the PSET institutions to take further steps in the management of the COVID-19 epidemic.
- b. This approach allows each person to screen themselves at home thereby reducing the risk of transmission of the virus when traveling to and from the campus and while waiting to do screening on campus.
- c. This technology-based system allows for each institution, and HIGHER HEALTH, to understand what screening is being done, and what the outcomes are (positive symptoms, referrals, etc.).
- d. This modality allows the institution to screen those students and staff who are off campus.

- e. This technology-based approach empowers each student and staff member to take responsibility for their health.

## **Option 2 – Mass Screening at Campus Entry Points Through Establishing Screening Stations at all Campuses**

Some institutions with limited entry points may choose to set up screening points at those gates of the institutions. These screening points will need to be large, high throughput systems that allow for each person/vehicle to be screened before entering the campus. Each person entering the institution will need to have a symptom screening done, and then triaged into a separate area for testing (or referral for testing) if they report a COVID-19 symptom. HIGHER HEALTH recommends that institutions install non-invasive, fever screening apparatus, such as infrared thermometers and CCTV thermometers, at the entry point as an additional measure. Two considerations are needed for establishing screening points:

- a. HIGHER HEALTH together with each Institution will develop many Student and Staff Volunteers and necessary Infrastructure as needed to screen the thousands of students, staff, visitors, and contractors entering our campuses daily. This will need to be modelled to ensure that the screening process does not prevent the normal workings of the institution.
- b. If Option 1 (above) is also in use, then the screening of those entering can be sped up if the person can show that they have screened themselves via the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital COVID-19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) and have no COVID-19 symptoms. A daily bar code, with the date, will be generated for quick approval of the negative COVID-19 students and staff for quick entry.

Steps for Mass-Screening at Institutions (this screening is for those students who cannot screen themselves at home or who do not have any devices (like a phone, smartphone, etc.) that can assist them with their daily Self-screening using the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital COVID-19 Screening System (HealthCheck):

**Step 1:** Institutions must establish a campus-based COVID-19 task team to be led by a senior management official. HIGHER HEALTH recommends for its staff to include in this task team. The COVID-19 task team will be responsible for identifying designated triage areas near campus entry points. It is recommended that a nearby Car Parking or an Entrance Foyer etc be considered when selecting the desired site for establishing Screening Stations. Management of the institution will be



required to provide oversight and to assist the teams with additional tables, tents, chairs, and other basic requirements that arise.

**Step 2:** Each student presenting at the Screening Stations must adhere to government regulations such as social distancing of 2 meters, no hand to hand contact and wearing of a face mask/cloth throughout the process. Institutional management should ensure that campus security assist with monitoring student adherence to the regulations and managing the queues (tape can be used to indicate distances of 2 meters between people).

**Step 3:** The management of each PSET institution will be responsible for ensuring that all students and staff are alerted to the availability of the Screening Stations and the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”). Student volunteers and HIGHER HEALTH staff can assist with this.

**Step 4:** HIGHER HEALTH will develop and train Student Volunteers at all campuses to provide support at the Screening Stations, that will ensure screening for all students, staff, and any visiting service provider entering campuses. Student Volunteers with support from Campus Student Support Services and HIGHER HEALTH staff will form part of the Screening Stations. The Screening Stations will provide Screening and Education program for all Students, Staff, and other visiting Service Providers on COVID 19 daily. A Detailed Student Volunteer Training Curriculum has been developed by HIGHER HEALTH and a Student Volunteer Protocol is being sent to all institutions in this regard.

**Step 5** Once people have been screened, using the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”), the below steps will be followed:

- a. People with no symptoms will receive education, information, and health promotion materials on COVID-19. HIGHER HEALTH and student volunteers, who are capacitated on COVID-19, will be available to engage people further on the material.
- b. If people have COVID-19 symptoms, the following action is taken based on the **Risk Classification** suggested in the NICD and NDOH guidelines (identified in Option 1):
  - **Self-Isolate:** Go back home. Those that cannot self-isolate, will be linked to the department of health quarantine sites/isolation centres.

- **Test:** Person will be referred to services on campus if there are qualified professional nurses trained on COVID-19 testing or to the nearest COVID-19 testing site.  
[https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1BPFigDnAl4F\\_k13KaKkfWdrpRkJ8f0Ar&shorturl=1&ll=-26.22474104683609%2C25.13659769374999&z=3](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1BPFigDnAl4F_k13KaKkfWdrpRkJ8f0Ar&shorturl=1&ll=-26.22474104683609%2C25.13659769374999&z=3)
  - **Seek Emergency Care:** Should the person test positive for COVID-19, the PSET institution’s management will be alerted and will then follow the institution’s emergency response plans or the national guidelines of NDOH and NICD pertaining to the necessary care and support.
- c. **Linkage to treatment, care, and support:** Each campus should set up a referral system for testing. Each person who screens positive for COVID-19 must be referred to an appropriate testing site. This can be done in two ways:
- If the institution has an adequate clinic on-site or roving nurses as provided by HIGHER HEALTH as part of the screening teams, the students can be referred to this facility for testing.
  - For those institutions where there is no adequate clinic/staff on-site, the person must be given a referral note to be taken to a designated nearest District COVID-19 testing site.
  - The HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) will also link the individual to the national, district tracking and tracing program of the NDOH, NICD and CDC, for further assistance.
  - The PSET institution management will do follow up to ensure successful referral to testing, where indicated, as per the HIGHER HEALTH PSET Sector Guidelines.

**Step 6:** Student volunteers will self-screen, using the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”), at the end of each day and this will be confirmed by the team leader. The HIGHER HEALTH Clinical roving teams will be deployed to further screen and test student volunteers on a routine basis.

### **Option 3 – Class-based Screening**

PSET institutions need to consider that each lecture/tutorial/practical start with a coordinated process of assessing if anyone present has symptoms of COVID-19. This will have to be done confidentially, and

sensitively, to ensure that staff/students are not subjected to prejudice and stigma. The HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) should be used for this purpose.

#### **Option 4 – Roving Teams-based Screening**

PSET institutions with HIGHER HEALTH through their Student and Staff volunteers can work as “roving” screening teams across the campus. These teams should be present in all possible areas offering guidance and support to students and staff, including symptom screening and triage of symptomatic persons into testing and linkage to care. Such teams should have access to student areas, staff areas, residences, and common areas, such as cafeterias. The HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) should be used for this purpose.

#### **Option 5 – Residence-based Screening**

Each student residence needs a COVID-19 response team, and within that team should be screening volunteers – as above in option 4. The Residence Management will take the lead in the and will be supported by the HIGHER HEALTH team. These screening teams should ensure that all people within the residences are screened daily, and where persons display symptoms, they should be linked to testing as well as being instructed to self-isolate within their rooms or a residence sickbay. Where this is not possible, students/staff need to be referred to government quarantine facilities. The HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) should be used for recording daily symptom screening.

#### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Precautions & Prevention**

Strict PPE precautions to be observed by all people doing screening that includes Student Volunteers, Support Staff, and HIGHER HEALTH Staff:

- a. Maintaining social distancing by keeping 2 meters from any person at all times
- b. No physical contact with other people i.e. no handshaking and ensure that you sneeze and cough into your elbow or a tissue (safely discard the tissue immediately)
- c. No hand to hand contact through the exchange of paper, cellphone devices, or any other material or commodity
- d. Mandatory use of face masks always
- e. Continuous use of hand sanitizers

- f. Screen shields to be used by all screening volunteers and staff at all workstations and triage to minimize direct contact between student volunteers and students and staff by providing built Perspex Screens
- g. PPE will be provided to the teams that will be screening students at campuses, in keeping with the national guidelines on PPE by both HIGHER HEALTH and Institutional management.
- h. Student volunteers will be provided with hand sanitizer and a facial mask/cloth by the team leader.
- i. Daily, all student volunteers and staff will self-screen using the HIGHER HEALTH Integrated Digital Covid-19 Screening System (“HealthCheck”) which will be confirmed by their team leader

### **Leveraging the Opportunities for Health Promotion**

When screening for COVID-19 symptoms, every effort should be made to include other relevant health promotion messages and material by all Support staff, Student Volunteers, Academics, and HIGHER HEALTH Staff at campuses. These screenings are opportunities to leverage on other health issues messaging.

### **Addendum 1: Most common COVID-19 symptoms**

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Nasal secretions
- Muscle and joint pains
- Chills
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>