

# Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the 13th edition of the *District Health Barometer* (DHB) which provides information across a wide range of district health services and spans 43 indicators.

This annual publication continues to provide policy makers, health care workers, planners, researchers, academics and other consumers of national health system information a unique overview of the performance of public health services in South Africa.

A new development in the previous edition of the *DHB* was the alignment of the format of the district chapters to the District Health Plan (DHP) template of the National Department of Health (NDoH). This has considerably assisted district managers in the development of their DHPs and improved the efficiency of the planning process.

This year, after consultation with key stakeholders and users of the *DHB*, we have made further refinements to the format, and divided the publication into two distinct but interlinked offerings: the *DHB: District Health Profiles 2017/18* and the *District Health Barometer 2017/18*. We have also worked together with the NDoH in developing the DHP template for the 2019/20 – 2021/22 period which has resulted in a more user-friendly tool and greater congruence between the template and the information provided in the *DHB*.

These enhancements will contribute to a more efficient planning process in the districts and enable district managers to spend more time on the development of action plans to address the challenges and needs in their respective districts.

We are grateful to the NDoH for their continuing financial support and collaboration, since without their invaluable contribution this important publication would not be possible.

As always, we welcome commentary and feedback that facilitates further improvement of the *District Health Barometer*, thus enhancing the value to the health system of future editions.

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