

Foreword

The District Health Barometer (DHB) is an annual overview of public health services in South Africa which has become an important planning and management resource for health service providers, managers, researchers and policy-makers in the country. The key objective of the DHB is to provide reliable and credible information that can be used to inform the development of District Health Plans and the National Department of Health's Annual Performance Plan. In order to ensure that the Barometer is timely and relevant, the DHB staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that this year's edition is ready for dissemination before the process of developing District Health Plans commences.

The DHB provides information that is disaggregated to district level and gives districts current information on their functioning and progress over time in relation to previous years as well as other districts. Each edition highlights problem areas and data quality issues, but also highlights areas of sustained and dramatic progress. Moreover, the DHB highlights areas that require deeper research to identify the underlying issues contributing to the indicator values and trends.

Data feeding into the publication are drawn from a range of sources including the District Health Information System (DHIS), Statistics SA, the Electronic TB Register (ETR.Net) and National Treasury.

Now in its eighth edition, the DHB includes 42 indicators with trend illustrations and profiles of South Africa, the nine provinces and the 52 districts.

Research conducted with end-users of the DHB has attested to the usefulness of the publication in their planning processes.

We urge health service providers, managers, researchers and policy-makers to make use of this valuable information to improve the services provided to the South African population. The information available in this and future DHB publications will also assist users in improving the quality of data and information relating to public health services.

We invite commentary and feedback that will facilitate further improvement and enhance the benefits of future editions of the DHB.

Dr. Themba L. Moeti

Chief Executive Officer

Health Systems Trust