To: Editors & Health Journalists

Issued by: National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) CEO, Prof Koleka Mlisana

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UPDATE ON NHLS SYSTEMS AND SERVICE RESTORATION

JOHANNESBURG – The NHLS initially projected that its systems would be fully operational by 15 July 2024. The NHLS reports that some systems are now operating, with more being available as soon as appropriate security measures are completed. We are making considerable progress and remain committed to completing the restoration of all components.

The NHLS recognises the considerable impact this delay has had on public health facilities and the people of South Africa, and we sincerely apologise for any inconvenience caused. However, we are committed to resolving these issues and are convinced that our teams are making significant efforts towards a robust and fully functional system.

Rebuilding our systems has been an intricate and challenging endeavour. It entails not just restoring data and services, but also ensuring that our infrastructure is robust, safe, and resistant to future intrusions. Our priority is the safety, security, and reliability of our systems, which are essential for the successful functioning of public health services.

The NHLS is taking interim steps to mitigate the impact on our operations. This includes the use of eLABS (an NHLS-designed and developed platform). The eLABS system provides clinicians with TB and HIV-related results that were generated before the security breach. It also allows for electronic sample registration and access to electronic results for any newly registered specimens.

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