

## National Certification Committees (NCC) Terms of Reference

Updated: 4 February 2019

### **Membership:**

National Certification Committees (NCCs) are **independent committees** made up of leading experts in **relevant disciplines** (in the fields of public health, immunization, epidemiology, pediatrics, infectious diseases, neurology and virology), appointed by the national government in consultation with the PAHO/WHO Regional Office.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

1. Assess the fulfillment of polio eradication certification requirements in their country, as defined by the Global Certification Commission (GCC) and the Regional Certification Commission (RCC), and respond to the following questions:
  - i. Population Immunity: *Is polio vaccination coverage high enough to prevent the circulation of wild poliovirus or emergence of circulating vaccine derived poliovirus (cVDPV)?*
  - ii. Surveillance: *Is polio surveillance sensitive enough to rapidly and reliably detect an imported wild poliovirus or VDPV should it emerge?*
  - iii. Containment: *Has the country minimized the risks of a facility-associated reintroduction of poliovirus for facilities collecting, handling or storing materials infectious or potentially infectious for polioviruses?*
  - iv. Risk Assessment: *Has the country conducted a risk assessment down to the subnational level?*
  - v. Risk Mitigation: *Has the country developed an appropriate risk mitigation plan?*
  - vi. Event and Outbreak Preparedness: *Is the country adequately prepared to respond to an event or outbreak if one were to occur?*
  - vii. Polio-free Status Assessment: *Is the committee firmly convinced that the country was free of polio during the reporting period?*
2. Review and approve the polio eradication documentation requested from the RCC on an annual basis and submit the documentation with a signed approval form and letter to the RCC, through the PAHO country office.
3. Review and approve the national response plan for an event or outbreak of polio.

4. Review and approve the reports and documentation on containment of all polioviruses to assess progress to minimize poliovirus facility associated risk and recommend actions necessary to achieve containment goals.
5. Work closely with national authorities on the implementation of RCC recommendations to maintain polio-free status in the country and to fulfill the requirements for global polio eradication certification.
6. Review and respond to letters sent by the RCC with country specific recommendations.
7. When the time comes, review and approve the final certification report and any other required documentation to the RCC.

**Conflict of interest:**

NCC members act in a personal capacity and **cannot have responsibility for activities that support polio eradication in their country**. If at any time a member of the NCC takes direct responsibility for the eradication of polio in his/her country, his/her membership in the NCC will be terminated.

All members must complete a declaration of conflict of interest. \*

**Confidentiality agreement:**

As NCC discussions include sensitive country information, it is recommended that all members sign confidentiality agreements. \*\*

*\* PAHO / WHO is developing the declaration of conflict of interests form and will share the form with all of them in the coming months.*

*\*\* You can find the format for the confidentiality agreement in annex 1.*

**Annex 1: Confidentiality agreement for the National Committee for the Certification of Polio Eradication**

1. The National Certification Committee (NCC) for the Eradication of Polio of country, acting through the role and delegating responsibility of the Ministry of Health, has access to certain detailed information related to the eradication of polio.
2. The undersigned, as members of the Committee, will have access to the information in the course of their participation in the verification process of the certification of polio eradication, through their participation in meetings, collaborative work spaces such as teleconferences, electronic communications, among others.
3. The Ministry of Health is willing to provide the undersigned with the required information, and organize the provision of the information, so that the NCC can fulfill its responsibilities in relation to the verification of polio eradication in country.
4. The undersigned agree to consider the information as confidential and proprietary of the Ministry of Health and will take reasonable measures to ensure that the information is not used, disclosed or copied, as a whole or in part, in any other way than established in this agreement.
5. The undersigned also agree not to communicate the deliberations and decisions of the Committee to third parties, except as agreed with the Ministry of Health and the Regional Certification Commission (RCC) for polio eradication.
6. The obligations of the undersigned will remain in force after the end of their participation in the process of certification of the eradication of polio in country.

Date:

Name:	Name:
Signature:	Signature:
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