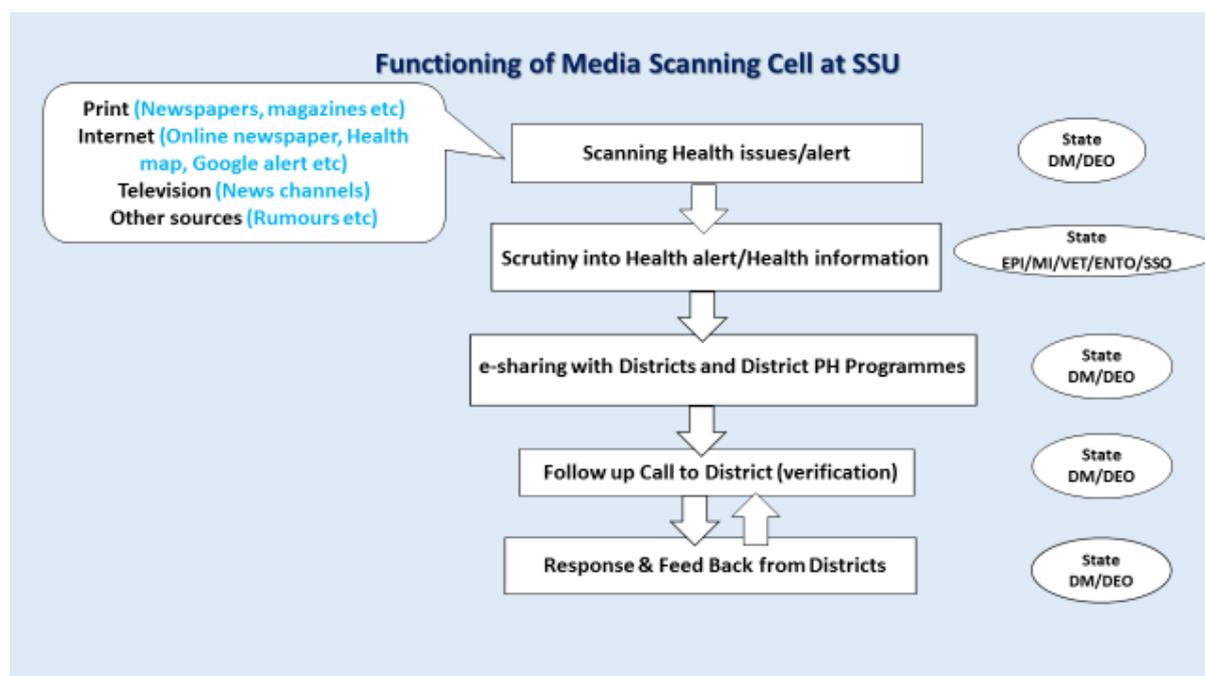# *Media Scanning and Verification Cell at States*

Surveillance has been enhanced by the development of several novel approaches complementing conventional methods. The advent of electronic and print media has been a source of informal information for ongoing disease alerts and health related events. They are vital for detecting outbreaks of infectious diseases and are important tool for enhanced surveillance in the detection of outbreaks early.

IDSP - Central Surveillance Unit established Media Scanning & Verification cell (MSVC) in 2008 for providing supplemental information on early detection of outbreaks. The general objective is to provide an early warning signals, for detection of potential outbreaks/unusual health events so that an appropriate and timely action can be taken. On an average 2-3 media alerts on occurrences of unusual health events are detected.

At the State level the flow chart shown below can be adopted for the functioning of media scanning

Functioning of Media Scanning Cell at SSU

Print (Newspapers, magazines etc)
Internet (Online newspaper, Health map, Google alert etc)
Television (News channels)
Other sources (Rumours etc)

Scanning Health issues/alert — State DM/DEO

Scrutiny into Health alert/Health information — State EPI/MI/VET/ENTO/SSO

e-sharing with Districts and District PH Programmes — State DM/DEO

Follow up Call to District (verification) — State DM/DEO

Response & Feed Back from Districts — State DM/DEO

* Data Manger (DM); Data Entry Operator (DEO); Epidemiologist (EPI); Microbiologist (MI); Veterinary Consultant (VET); Entomologist (ENTO); State Surveillance Officer (SSO)

- Print, electronic media (television, internet), reports of rumours and other information transmitted through various formal and informal channels are screened manually for unusual health events.
- The screened information of unusual health events are analysed by epidemiologists who generate media alerts that are disseminated electronically to relevant District Surveillance Officers and followed up by phone for verification.
- Verified media alert reports are distributed to responsible health authorities and stakeholders for appropriate public health action.

State Surveillance Units are encouraged to establish a similar mechanism to scan local newspapers/electronic media for unusual health related events pertaining to outbreak prone infectious diseases covered under IDSP. This activity provides early warning of occurrence of local and focal unusual health events/ potential outbreaks in advance. It can assist in the generation of hypotheses about potential epidemiological links between cases. It also helps in tracking further spread of disease.

Activities & Standard Operating Procedures

At the State level Data Manger (SDM) scans media for unusual health related event(s) in Districts, State, and neighbouring States/countries in the following media

- ✓ paper copy newspapers
- ✓ online/e-paper editions and
- ✓ scan Google Alerts and Health Map and any other informal sources
- ✓ rumour registers

Daily in the morning the SDM should scan the paper edition of newspapers

- ✓ Look at the heading of the article
- ✓ If relevant, read through the article's body
- ✓ Get initial input from Epidemiologist of the State
- ✓ If relevant, cut out the complete news article with heading
- ✓ Scan the news article

SDM also scan selected list of online/e-paper editions in the morning

- ✓ First, look at the heading of the article
- ✓ If relevant, read through the article's body
- ✓ Then get initial input from Epidemiologist of the State
- ✓ If relevant, save the complete news article in a file (folder)

SDM will also scan for media alerts on unusual health events in Google Alerts and Health Map.

- ✓ Google Alerts:
    - ✓ The following are the key words for Google alerts which can be utilised to capture unusual events (Fall ill, Fell ill, Filariasis, Mumps, Plague, Swine flu, Tetanus, Anthrax, Bird Flu, Chickenpox, Chikungunya, Cholera, Dengue, Diarrhea, Fever, Food poisoning, Gastroenteritis, Hepatitis, Hepatitis A and B Immunizations, Hepatitis B, Influenza A (H1N1), Japanese encephalitis, Jaundice, Kala-azar, Malaria, Measles, Meningitis, Mysterious illness, Polio, Rabies, Typhus, Unknown Disease, Unknown fever, Viral Fever, Viral Pneumonia, Yellow fever, Corona Virus, MERS-CoV, H7N9)
    - ✓ Google Alert Settings:
        - ✓ Volume – All Results
        - ✓ How Often: As it happens
        - ✓ Delivered to: mediascanningcell(state name)@gmail.com

- ✓ Health Map (www.healthmap.org)
    - ✓ Search for events reported in State, India and neighbouring States/countries

✓ Click the pin dropper for source article and save in folder.

The scanned information are to be scrutinised by State Epidemiologist/State Surveillance Officer for categorising the health event into alert or information and reported in the format *Annexed A* for further transmission to respective Districts.

An email account for media scanning verification cell at the State level has to be created (mediascanningcell(state name)@gmail.com), so that the health events are shared with respective District Surveillance Units.
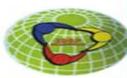
A copy of alert which involves multistate involvement and adjoining border States inclusion in any epidemic prone diseases outbreak should be shared with idspmedialert@gmail.com, idsp-npo@nic.inj.

SDM should verify the alerts through phone and maintain a call log*. If the verified alerts results in an unusual event /outbreaks the epidemiologist should communicate with the concerned District to send a EWS to Central Surveillance unit.*

A repository of all the health alerts generated and the investigation reports received are to be maintained in the prescribed database as *Annexed B* by the SDM**.**

States should update and send Annexure B to idspmedialert@gmail.com, idsp-npo@nic.in, on a weekly basis. The investigation reports of the alerts are to be reported in English language.

Annexure A

MSVC-(****NAME OF THE STATE)

State Logo	**Media Scanning & Verification Cell-******			
	Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, ****			

State Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name District / Block	News Source/Publication Language
***-001	DD/M/YY	DD/M/YY		www.timesofindia.com/English http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/61-taken-ill-after-wedding-feast-in-Saraspur/articleshow/50968146.cms
Title:	**ABCDC**			
Action By SSU/DSU - ****	Information communicated to SSU/DSU/CSU-Media Scanning Cell-IDSP, NCDC-Delhi			

🌳 Save a tree. Don't print unless it's really necessary!

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP)

State office Address

For more information please contact: Media Scanning & Verification Cell-****: - Phone (00)00000
Email: - mediascanningcell****@gmail.com

Join CSU on http://www.facebook.com/pages/Media-Scanning-Verification-Cell-IDSPNCDC/137297949672921

https://twitter.com/MSVC1

Annexure B

Name of the state												
Date of Alert	News Source	State Alert ID	State	District	Block	Disease	Subject	Verified,True /False	Report	Comments	Remark	
January, 2016												