

Development of Guidance on TB Infection Control by WHO Information Note

The Stop TB Department of WHO, in collaboration with other relevant departments, including HIV and the department of Epidemic and Pandemic Alert and Response, is currently developing a policy document which addresses what TB infection control interventions should be implemented at the national level, and how to prioritize them. It will expand on the expert advice garnered at the meetings of "TB infection control experts" and of the "Three I's meeting, TB infection Control, Intensified Case Finding and Isoniazid Preventive Treatment in Resource Limited Settings," both held in Geneva, in October 2007 and April 2008, respectively. Production of the document is already under way with the following process: 1) developing questions for literature searches, based on a wide consultative process that will include meetings, expert panels (steering and guidelines panels) and end users of the document 2) conducting the literature searches to provide evidence-based answers to the questions, and 3) crafting of TB infection control recommendations based on the evidence collected and rated with a standardized grading system. The questions for the literature searches will be available by June 2008, while the recommendations and final document is anticipated at the end of 2008.

In order to provide you with timely information regarding the development of these two documents, we will be establishing a website in April 2008 where information and updates on TB infection control will be posted. Given the urgency to address infection control at the country level, both in terms of capacity development and national action planning, we recommend that you continue to refer to the content found in the following documents, pending the development of revised guidance:

1. WHO: Guidelines for the prevention of tuberculosis in health care facilities in resource-limited settings. Geneva: WHO, 1999
2. WHO: Tuberculosis infection control in the era of expanding HIV care and treatment Addendum. Geneva: WHO, 2006

Both documents can be found at the following link:

http://www.who.int/tb/publications/who_tb_99_269/en/index.html

Additionally, the TB Infection Control Subgroup of the TB/HIV Working Group, Stop TB Partnership will shortly be developing a TB infection control brief which highlights key action steps that can be taken immediately at the health facility level to prevent TB transmission, stressing key infection control measures from current guidelines, as well as lessons learned from best practice and successful implementation models. This brief is anticipated at the end of Summer 2008.

If you have any suggestions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact:

Rose Pray at prayr@who.int or Fabio Scano at scanof@who.int.

We also encourage you to join the TB Infection Control Subgroup by sending an email to Rose Pray.