

## TB INFECTION CONTROL SUBGROUP

of the

## TB/HIV WORKING GROUP

### BACKGROUND STATEMENT

Transmission of *M. tuberculosis* is a recognized risk in health-care facilities, especially in resource-limited settings where transmission is facilitated by inadequate TB infection control measures. The impact of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) epidemic, the increasing importance of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR) TB, and the emergence of extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB have heightened concern about the risk of *M. tuberculosis* transmission in health-care facilities and the urgency to have TB infection control measures in all facilities where undiagnosed and diagnosed TB patients or suspects receive care.

In addition, nosocomial transmission of *M. tuberculosis* affects not only other patients but also visitors and in particular, the personal health of HCWs. This can result in either temporary or permanent loss of HCWs from the workforce. The risk for acquisition of *M. tuberculosis* among patients and HCWs could be significantly reduced if governments, health authorities, and HCWs make TB infection control a high priority.

Implementation of TB infection control is part of a wider agenda of airborne infection control. Synergies and novel approaches to build on existing health system policies need to be explored.