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## Tuberculosis Outbreak in Thunder Bay - Update

In follow up to our previous communication in March, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit is advising that a tuberculosis outbreak is still ongoing in the city of Thunder Bay. To date, we have identified nine active cases and at least five latent cases associated with this outbreak. All of the cases are under-housed, or close friends or family of individuals who are under-housed. The Thunder Bay District Health Unit has identified and is following up with individuals who may have been exposed to tuberculosis.

*Mycobacterium tuberculosis* is transmitted via airborne particles. *M. tuberculosis* may result in asymptomatic, latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) or symptomatic, active tuberculosis disease. LTBI is typically diagnosed via tuberculin skin testing (Mantoux test). LTBI is not contagious, but approximately 10% of people with LTBI will develop active disease sometime in their lives.

In response to this outbreak, the TBDHU would appreciate your assistance with the following:

- **Maintain a high index of suspicion** for respiratory tuberculosis in patients who are homeless or under-housed and present with new cough, chest pain, lymphadenopathy, hemoptysis, weight loss, fever, or night sweats.
- **Obtain imaging and sputum samples for diagnosis if you suspect or want to rule out active respiratory tuberculosis.** Tuberculin skin testing (TST) does not have a role in the diagnosis of active disease. TST may be falsely negative with active disease.
- When ordering sputum samples for suspected cases of active tuberculosis who are currently or have recently been homeless or under-housed, or who report contact with this population, please **include the public health outbreak number TBH-2018-002 on the submitted lab requisition(s).**
- Under Ontario Regulation 135/18 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, **report all confirmed and suspected cases of active tuberculosis, and all cases LTBI** to the TBDHU Infectious Disease Program (625-5900 or 1-888-294-6630). The LTBI reporting form is available at **TBDHU.COM** (search for **TB**; form available under **Health Care Providers**).
- Employ infection prevention and control procedures when examining patients who may have active tuberculosis. Active respiratory tuberculosis, including pulmonary and laryngeal tuberculosis, **requires airborne precautions, including fit-tested N95 respirators for healthcare providers.**

For more information, visit **TBDHU.COM** (search for **TB**).

**Questions? Please contact the TBDHU Infectious Disease Program at 625-5900 or 1-888-294-6630.**