

THE TRUTH ABOUT TB



Online tuberculosis training for primary care professionals

From the Royal College of GPs, the HPA and TB Alert

GP's Practice Nurses and Nurse Practitioners can now access free online training on tuberculosis (TB). The course features two, 30-minute modules to help you identify signs and symptoms of all forms of TB, refer patients to specialist services and provide appropriate case management to positively diagnosed patients.

Rates of TB have been rising in the UK for 25 years. In 2011, the Health Protection Agency reported 8,963 cases of TB, with 14.4 cases per 100,000 population – more new diagnoses than of HIV. The trend is particularly acute in major cities, with some London boroughs having rates equivalent to high incidence developing countries.

TB remains closely associated with health inequalities: 74% of cases in 2011 were found in non-white ethnic groups and 9% of cases had at least one social risk factor for TB: a history of problem drug or alcohol use, a history of homelessness or a history of imprisonment.

The Government has acknowledged that failure to manage tuberculosis effectively can be a costly public health and economic issue (TB Commissioning Toolkit, DH, 2007). Early diagnosis and treatment of TB is essential, to reduce the risk of long-term damage to an individual's health and to limit onward transmission. Yet too many people are diagnosed in A&E departments, often in advanced stages of TB.

Patients require close support throughout the often difficult treatment for TB, which takes at least six months. Drug-resistant forms can develop if treatment is incomplete – case numbers of multi drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) increased by 26% in the UK between 2010 and 2011. Treatment for MDR-TB is less effective, more toxic and more expensive.

This training course will provide you with the knowledge and resources you need to make swift and appropriate referrals of suspected TB cases, for diagnosis within specialist services. The course will also help you work with specialist services to support patients through treatment.

COURSE CONTENTS

- The risks, signs and symptoms of TB
- Local TB statistics
- Screening questions and tests
- Treatment support
- Contact tracing

You can complete the training online, in your own time, through the RCGP's Online Learning Environment: www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk/tb

- **Accredited through the RCGP credit-based system for Continuing Professional Development: credits for learning and impact**
- **Content complies with NICE guidelines on TB prevention and control**



www.thetruthabouttb.org

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