



## National Tuberculosis Controllers Association Executive Board Conference Call Minutes July 16, 2009

### I. Attendees

- A. Phil Griffin, Denise Ingman, Kim Field, Kathy Hursen, Pat Infield, Cristie Chesler, Shea Rabley, Ron Karpick, Jon Warkentin, Iram Bakhtawar, Peter Davidson, Michael Leonard, Dawn Farrell
- B. CDC Staff: Drew Posey, Phil Talboy, Dawn Tuckey, Heather Duncan, Kashaf Ijaz, Valerie Robinson
- C. Guests: None

### II. NTCA Board Discussion Items

- A. President's Report – Phil Griffin
  - o DTBE received a \$3M increase in funding and they created two new workgroups were created; one to focus on preventing new cases of TB and the other to focus on MDR-TB. NTCA asked that DTBE increase the Pacific Islands funding to the same base as low-incidence states.
  - o Workgroup had already been meeting when NTCA was asked to join. A menu of ideas had already been generated, and senior staff had already given feedback. Denise Ingman and Kim Field were appointed by the Board to be on this workgroup.
  - o Phil Griffin and Mike Arbise were appointed to be on this workgroup. Discussion involved setting up some border labs and focus on border crossers. Members commented that a panel on molecular beacons had developed protocols for testing. NTCA joined the group, and the group then adjusted who would get these labs. El Paso and San Diego were suggested to do testing.
- B. Committee/Workgroup Reports
  - o PCSI Update – Jim Cobb  
At a recent meeting, the TB group presented information on past collaboration with HIV programs. There may be a larger meeting scheduled in Atlanta to continue discussions.
  - o Model Law Update – Phil Griffin  
The Board was reminded to respond to the draft document. There will be a meeting in Atlanta to further discuss issues with the report. Legal representatives on the Committee do not appear to understand TB issues.
  - o EDN Workgroup – Phil Griffin  
Workgroup is being restructured. Co-chairs will be Mike Arbise and Ann O'Fallon (Refugee Health Coordinator). Carol Pozsik will also serve on this workgroup. The remainder of the workshop

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representatives are from states having low, medium, and high incidence levels of immigrant and refugee referrals

### III. CDC Discussion Items

#### A. Proposed Removal of HIV Entry Ban – Drew Posey

- Panel physician criteria are set in regulation (including TB), but HIV is unique in that it is also required by law. On July 2, 2009, a notice of proposed rule making to remove HIV as an entry ban was announced. There will be a comment period prior to finalizing the rule. Anyone can go the CDC website and submit comments.
- The across-the-board requirement for HIV screening would end. In addition, immigrants would no longer need a waiver. (Refugees can come without waivers.) Drew commented that just because HIV testing is not required doesn't mean all testing will end. Physicians to use their judgment for when testing is appropriate.
- Phil Griffin commented that he knows many TB controllers have advocated for lifting the HIV testing requirement. There is some concern that ACET's statement is that testing will still occur in anyone with Class A or B conditions. Some felt the issue here is that physicians still have to practice the standard of care and not politicize the process. Drew commented that there is a concern that if you start doing HIV testing on people overseas, a situation called "public charge" may occur. This would essentially cause HIV-positive immigrants to be refused entry because they are going to cost public health. Given the thousands of people with a TB condition, there could be many excluded due to this public charge. Drew thinks we need to be very careful that recommendations we make result in no changes to what is occurring now. Drew also commented that there are very few TB/HIV persons and few waivers requested.

#### B. CoAg Concerns

- Several Board members voiced concern that there were several new requirements in the grant for increased effort with no funding. Example: surveillance component requiring active surveillance by reviewing hospital discharge records.
- There was concern that it was not clear that NTIP would be used for all the objectives vs. state objectives.
- Also there was concern about developing a new evaluation plan for the next five years. Kashef Ijaz commented that state plans vary. Some were good, others were not, and some changed mid-stream. Look at what was done in the last five years, whether you've accomplished the goals. Some may need to be changed, some kept.
- Valerie Robinson commented on the surveillance issues. Language regarding active surveillance came from the 2005 CoAg, brought back because there is renewed interest in surveillance. Valerie asked how we know we weren't missing cases. Several members commented that it would require a large amount of resources to find one extra case. The problem is delayed diagnosis vs. not finding cases. Many states are already doing active surveillance. Valerie likes the language of "good relationships" and feels we may need to provide

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feedback to those groups or areas. Kashef commented that they want use to make some comment on one source (i.e., if we have access to the lab database, make sure there has been follow-up.) Valerie brought up the issue because there is a new system in place where they will go out to the states and help develop this kind of active surveillance program.

#### C. State and Big City Profiles

- Board members asked CDC how the information in this report will be used.
- Kashef commented that it will depend on how each state is organized as to what you'll get back. The profiles can be used for advocacy. The first report should be an overview. It might be helpful to specify that the state put money into TB.
- Jennifer will contact the new Board members or others who weren't on the call to explain the project. Phil Griffin recommended that the report be deferred until September when states have completed their CoAg applications.

#### IV. **Next Meeting**

The next NTCA conference call will be August 20, 2009, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time.

Minutes submitted by Denise Ingman, NTCA Secretary.