Dear colleagues:

At DTBE, we appreciate the tremendous importance and value of the work that you do every day to control and prevent TB. We also recognize the once-in-a-lifetime nature of the current COVID-19 situation, and the resulting demand on you to apply your skills as experienced public health professionals to this current crisis situation. Like you, DTBE has had to shift responsibilities and priorities so that staff can contribute to the public health emergency response activities.

Accordingly, we want to try and address one potential source of stress that you might be experiencing, which is the implementation of the 2020 Report of Verified Case of Tuberculosis (RVCT). As you know, the deadline for switching over to the new 2020 case notification message format was previously set as December 31, 2020. The deadline for submitting data for all new 2020 RVCT data elements was set as December 31, 2021.

However, because of the need to focus available resources on the current COVID-19 response, DTBE is eliminating the interim December 31, 2020 deadline for switching over to the new case notification message format. This means that reporting areas do not need to make the transition to the new case notification message format until December 31, 2021, and the switch to the new message format can occur concurrently with the addition of the new data elements. We do, however, encourage you to continue working toward 2020 RVCT implementation to the extent possible, and we are prepared to facilitate the onboarding of any reporting area at any point between now and the end of 2021. DTBE is also working on developing online 2020 RVCT training resources to replace the in-person training courses that we have had to cancel because of the COVID-19 situation. Please keep an eye out for updates on those materials in the next few months.

In order to maintain our capacity for timely TB outbreak detection and public reporting of TB surveillance data, the requirements for reporting of surveillance data to CDC and linking of case records to genotyping data in TB GIMS will remain as outlined in the TB
cooperative agreement. However, if you have reason to believe that the COVID-19 response will prevent you from meeting these surveillance reporting requirements, we encourage you to inform your Field Services Branch program consultants as soon as possible so that we can work with you to find potential solutions.

For technical assistance related to the 2020 RVCT or any other surveillance data issues, please contact the DTBE Helpdesk at DTBEsupport@cdc.gov.

Sincerely,

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