Introducing the sixth edition of the Canadian Tuberculosis Standards

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The sixth edition of the Canadian Tuberculosis Standards will soon be available in hard copy through the offices of the Canadian Lung Association (CLA), and the individual provincial and territorial lung associations, and in PDF format at <www.publichealth.gc.ca/tuberculosis>.

Historically, the Standards became important when effective treatment of tuberculosis became available and sanatoria closed. In contrast to the first (1972), second (1981), third (1988) and fourth (1996) editions, which were products of the Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS)/CLA alone, the fifth (2000) and sixth editions of the Standards were jointly produced by the CTS/CLA and Health Canada (fifth), and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) (sixth). The evolution of the Standards as a document dependent on the CTS for medical and scientific input, and on the PHAC for public health and policy input, was part of a broader shift from non-governmental to governmental organization of tuberculosis prevention and control activity in Canada.

The Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Program of the PHAC is the sponsor of the Canadian Tuberculosis Committee, a national committee with representation from each province and territory, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada, Correctional Service Canada, Canadian Public Health Laboratory Network, Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease, CLA, CTS and PHAC (both the National Microbiology Laboratory and the Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Program). It also houses the Canadian Tuberculosis Surveillance System and the Canadian Tuberculosis Laboratory Surveillance System, as well as represents Canada internationally. The major role of the Tuberculosis Committee of the CTS is now the preparation of the Standards. In fact, the membership of the CTS Tuberculosis Committee and the editorial committee of the Standards are one and the same; the editors of the Standards are the Chair of the CTS Tuberculosis Committee and the Manager of the Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Program of the PHAC.

The sixth edition of the Standards is a substantial revision to its predecessor the fifth edition (see below). Chapters or appendixes already in the fifth edition were redacted, and new chapters and appendixes were added (Chapters 14, 15 and 18; Appendixes D, E, F, G, H and J) after a systematic survey of end-user satisfaction with the fifth edition undertaken by the CTS. In addition to the chapter-specific table of contents and expanded bibliographies, the text is populated with a series of Web resources that will be regularly updated by PHAC and other agencies. As in the fifth edition, treatment recommendations are rated using a roman numeral (I, II or III), which indicates the quality of evidence supporting the recommendation (1). The Standards are meant to be a definitive resource on issues pertaining to tuberculosis prevention and control in Canada. In contrast to provincial and territorial guidelines, which describe how an action is to be accomplished and how the structure of care is framed, the Canadian Tuberculosis Standards, like the International Standards for Tuberculosis Care (available at <www.nationaltbcenter.edu/international/>), provide the foundation on which care can be based, presenting what should be done.

REFERENCES

CANADIAN TUBERCULOSIS STANDARDS, SIXTH EDITION (2007)

Preface

Acknowledgements

Epidemiology

Chapter 1 Epidemiology of tuberculosis in Canada

Melissa Phypers, Dennis Kunimoto, Marcel Behr, Derek Scholten, Edward Ellis

Medical aspects of tuberculosis

Chapter 2 Mycobacteriology laboratory standards: Services and policies

Joyce Wolfe, Kym Antonation, Meenu Kaushal Sharma

Chapter 3 Transmission and pathogenesis of tuberculosis

Richard Long, Kevin Schwartzman

Chapter 4 Diagnosis of tuberculosis infection and disease

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Chapter 5  Nonrespiratory tuberculosis  
Victoria Cook, Richard Long

Chapter 6  Treatment of tuberculosis disease and infection  
Vernon Hoepner, Heather Ward, Kevin Elwood

Chapter 7  Drug-resistant tuberculosis  
Richard Long, Monica Avendano, Lori Whitehead

Chapter 8  Pediatric tuberculosis  
Ian Kitai, Patricia Malloy, Alice Kowalczyk, Richard Long

Chapter 9  Tuberculosis and human immunodeficiency virus  
Stan Houston, Paul Brassard, Mark FitzGerald, Wendy Wobeser

Chapter 10  Nontuberculous mycobacterial disease  
Robert Cowie, Stephen Field, Anne Fanning

Public health aspects of tuberculosis

Chapter 11  The role of public health in tuberculosis control  
Robert Stirling, Donald Enarson

Chapter 12  Contact follow-up and outbreak management in tuberculosis control  
Terry-Nan Tannebaum, Lillian Yuan, Tamara Wallington

Chapter 13  Surveillance and screening in tuberculosis control  
Wendy Wobeser, Lillian Yuan, Brian Gushulak, Jerome Bickenback, Elaine Randell

Chapter 14  Tuberculosis control in First Nations and Inuit populations  
Pamela Orr, Cheryl Case, Teresa Mersereau, Marcus Lem

Chapter 15  Immigration and tuberculosis control in Canada  
Brian Gushulak, Sylvie Martin

Chapter 16  Tuberculosis control within institutions  
Dick Menzies, Michael Gardam

Chapter 17  Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination in Canada  
Kevin Elwood, Mark FitzGerald

International aspects

Chapter 18  Canada and international tuberculosis control  
Donald Enarson, Anne Fanning, Edward Ellis

Appendix A  Contributors
Appendix B  Canadian Tuberculosis Surveillance System
Appendix C  Definition of terms
Appendix D  Interferon-gamma release assays: Canadian Tuberculosis Committee advisory committee statement
Appendix E  Tuberculosis education and training resources
Appendix F  BCG vaccine usage in Canada – current and historical
Appendix G  Recommendations for the screening and prevention of tuberculosis in patients with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the screening for HIV in tuberculosis patients and their contacts
Appendix H  International standards for tuberculosis care
Appendix I  Immigration and medical surveillance guidelines
Appendix J  Ethical and legal considerations for tuberculosis surveillance and screening

Index