

MEMORANDUM

TO: Adult Care Facility, Assisted Living , and CCRC Members

FROM: Diane Darbyshire, Senior Policy Analyst

DATE: January 30, 2008

SUBJECT: **DOH Issues Further Clarifications Regarding TB Screening in ACFs**

ROUTE TO: Administrators, Program Directors

ABSTRACT: DOH issues further guidance regarding TB screening in ACFs.

As you know, the Department of Health (DOH) has issued *Dear Administrator* letters (DALs) over the past year regarding tuberculosis (TB) screening of residents, employees and volunteers in Adult Care Facilities (ACFs). Numerous questions were raised after each DAL was issued. DOH has thus provided further clarification, which is attached for your reference.

To view previous communications from DOH on this issue, see [NYAHS Doc ID #n00001524](#) and [NYAHS Doc ID #n00001181](#), and [NYAHS Doc ID # n00001149](#).

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this memo, please contact Diane Darbyshire at ddarbyshire@nyahsa.org or 518-449-2707, ext. 162.

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Attachment

DOH's Additional Clarifications of TB guidelines

Role of Local Health Departments

While some Local Health Departments (LHDs) may offer to provide TST services, the LHDs should not be expected to provide the TST for residents or employees. The TST should be provided to the prospective resident after s/he has had a medical evaluation required by the Department which includes a statement by the physician that the resident does not have a communicable disease, including but not limited to active TB. During this office visit the resident should receive the TST.

Employees are supposed to have their TST as part of their physical for employment.

Volunteers DAL HCBC 07–11 issued October 30, 2007 attempted to clarify what the Department means when it states volunteers who are consistently in the facility e.g., three or more days a week and share the same air space as the resident for several hours (e.g., three hours or more at a time) need to be screened and tested for active TB.

Following a discussion with the Bureau of TB Control, the Department has determined that the volunteers who are routinely scheduled to be in the facility (as an employee is routinely in the facility) should be tested.

RN Employees of an ACF

Nurses who are employees of an adult care facility (ACF) cannot administer or read the TST, because “ACF staff” are not authorized to provide nursing or medical services to residents.

Trained nurses, who are not employed by an ACF, may administer and read and/or evaluate the Tuberculin Skin Test within their scope of practice for residents and employees. These nurses may include but are not limited to nurses who work for a CHHA, LTHHCP or LHCSA, or a skilled nursing facility. The nurses must follow the protocol of their respective organizations, have a doctor's order and document the administration and reading of the TST in the individual's record.

When must prospective residents TB test be conducted

The first DAL: HCBC 06-09 July 31, 2006 authorizes that the resident's screening be completed within the first month of the admission to the facility. **This is the correct policy.** Please **disregard** the statement in DAL: HCBC 07–11 October 30, 2007 Subject: Questions and Answers Regarding TB Screening Requirements and Guidelines for Adult Care Facilities (Set II) that requires all resident's “new or respite” are required to be screened prior to admission.