Tuberculosis Outbreak in Sheboygan County

Current Situation

- Nine cases of active tuberculosis (TB) disease had been diagnosed within a large extended family in the City of Sheboygan since April 2013.
- All persons diagnosed with TB disease are currently being treated. One case was diagnosed as multidrug resistant (MDR-TB) and remains isolated. The remaining cases are responding to treatment, are no longer contagious and are no longer isolated.
- Those identified as having close and continued contact with the cases are being tested. As of July 24, no community spread has been identified in the over 100 individuals tested. Testing is still ongoing through August.

TB is Preventable and Curable

- TB is hard to catch. It is caused by a bacteria named *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and is transmitted through the air. Droplets containing the bacteria become airborne when a person with TB disease coughs, talks, or sings. These droplets are inhaled by other people. Some of the people who inhale these droplets will become infected, and some of them may develop active disease.
- Typically, transmission of TB bacteria is limited to family members and persons with sustained close contact. To actually become infected with TB bacteria, close (within 6 feet) and repeated or continuous contact (more than 8 hours) with the person who has TB is usually needed.
- TB can cause both latent infection (sleeping) and active disease. When infected, a person will have a positive TB skin or blood test, but will not be ill and cannot infect anyone else. If the infection becomes active disease, the person may have symptoms such as cough, fever, night sweats, unintended weight loss and may cough up blood.
- TB disease is preventable – persons with TB infection can take medication that will prevent the infection from moving into active disease, which is provided free by your local health department, and requires taking medication for several months.
- TB disease is curable – if a person has active disease, a combination of medications can cure the disease.

TB Statistics: Locally and Globally

- Sheboygan County averages 0-3 cases of active TB per year.
- About 70 people per year are diagnosed with active TB disease each year in Wisconsin.
- About 1000 people per year are treated for TB infection in Wisconsin.
- The World Health Organization estimates 1/3 of the world’s population is infected with TB.
- Information on TB can be found at [www.cdc.gov/tb](http://www.cdc.gov/tb). The CDC is a global leader in tuberculosis research and treatment.

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