



CTCA Position Statement on Annual TB Screening of Health Care Workers, October 17, 2016

The California Tuberculosis Controllers Association (CTCA) supports data driven testing of health care workers (HCWs) as delineated in the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in Health-Care Setting, 2005](#). This guideline recommends that the frequency of tuberculosis (TB) testing be based on a facility risk assessment, a reasonable, flexible strategy that safeguards against TB transmission and allows flexibility for the differing levels of TB risk in health care settings throughout California.

The California Tuberculosis Controllers Association no longer supports universal annual TB testing of HCWs for the following reasons:

- TB rates have been declining in California: more than half of California counties have fewer than 5 TB cases each year while 19 counties have zero cases of TB.
- HCWs have not been shown to have a higher rate of TB in California compared to non-HCW's: HCWs comprise approximately 4% of TB cases. Greater than 80% of these HCWs with TB are foreign born so were most likely infected with TB prior to coming to California.
- Testing of low risk individuals for TB leads to false positive results: 80-90% of HCWs with a TST or IGRA conversion subsequently tested negative for latent TB infection. False positive results lead to unnecessary tests and treatment which could ultimately cause harm.
- Only 8% of hospitals in California meet CDC criteria for annual testing.

#