March 2016 Update

Dear Colleagues and Friends of TB/HIV,

We have pleasure in sharing the latest quarterly update that includes an overview of the latest TB/HIV news, research data, resources and upcoming events to note in the diary.

**WHO Executive Board reviews draft health sector strategy for HIV for 2016-2021**

In January 2016, members of the 138th WHO Executive Board discussed the drafts of the WHO global health sector strategy on HIV for 2016-2021. Incorporated within the draft strategy a new target has been proposed to reduce HIV/TB mortality by 75% by 2020, compared with 2015. At the initiative of the Government of Brazil, and supported by many other delegates, the Executive Board decided to refer the draft strategy to the Sixty-Ninth World Health Assembly in May 2016 for consideration and possible endorsement.

**CROI 2016**

The 10th meeting on HIV/TB research was convened by the World Health Organization in Boston on February 22, 2016 in conjunction with CROI 2016 by the World Health. The meeting was chaired by Haileyesus Getahun of WHO’s Global TB Programme and Constance Benson of the University of California, San Diego, USA. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the implications of a novel WHO drug resistance surveillance data especially on pyrazinamide and fluoroquinolones on the development of future TB regimens, in designing clinical trials as well as its long term impact in clinical care of patients. The meeting report can be found at the following [link](#). The main CROI conference featured a high number of sessions allocated to TB, including a presentation during the opening session on [Confronting HIV and TB from the Bronx, NY to Tugela Ferry, South Africa](#) by Gerald Friedland, and a plenary presentation by Eric Rubin on [Tuberculosis: Why do I have to take so many pills?](#). During the oral abstract session on Tuberculosis and other opportunistic infections, Alison Grant presented on the results from the [TB Fast Track Trial](#): Empirical TB treatment in advanced HIV disease. This open cluster-randomised trial found that a strategy prioritising TB treatment for ambulatory patients living with HIV at high risk of TB did not reduce mortality or the risk of hospitalization by 6 months. During the same session, results from the [HPTN 071 (PopART) Trial](#) were presented by Comfort Phiri. This community-randomised trial, that assessed the acceptability of screening large numbers of people for TB using a simple screening tool, found an additional 9% of new TB cases among people with signs and symptoms of TB that would not have otherwise been identified. Also featured in this session were results of a study, presented by Sara Auld, that used social networking analysis to characterize patterns of [transmission of XDR TB in a high HIV prevalence setting in South Africa](#). And finally, Andreas Diacon presented on results of a study that concluded that meropenem combined with amoxicillin and clavulanic acid might be considered for all patients with highly resistant TB in whom intravenous treatment is feasible. In addition, there were over 70 posters relating to TB that were exhibited during the conference. Links to all the abstracts can be found on the [HIV/TB Roadmap](#).
Recently released resources for ending TB incidence and deaths among people living with HIV

**Integrating collaborative TB and HIV services within a comprehensive package of care for people who inject drugs: Consolidated Guidelines**

These new guidelines aim to reduce morbidity and mortality related to TB and HIV-associated TB among people who inject drugs (PWID) through the integrated delivery of a comprehensive and holistic package of care. The guidelines provide an update to the *2008 Policy guidelines for collaborative TB and HIV services for injecting and other drug users: an integrated approach*, and consolidate the latest recommendations relating to the management of TB, HIV-associated TB, HIV, viral hepatitis B and hepatitis C, and drug dependence. Although the main focus of this guidance is to benefit PWID, many of the recommendations are also relevant for those who use drugs and do not currently inject, but are in need of the respective services.

**PEPFAR Technical considerations for Country and Regional Operational Plans 2016** were released at the beginning of February 2016. Within the document PEPFAR reiterates its endorsement of the UNAIDS Fast-Track 90-90-90 targets for 2020 and highlights the importance of implementing collaborative TB/HIV activities as key to achieving these targets. It urges PEPFAR teams to ensure universal ART coverage (100%) for HIV-infected TB patients, through the support of integrated models of HIV/TB care to detect HIV-associated TB and provide ART in TB clinics. It further points out that viral suppression is only achievable if people living with HIV are alive, on ART, and virally suppressed. If PLHIV become ill and die of TB, the question of viral suppression becomes irrelevant. Furthermore, TB is known to worsen HIV progression and thereby leads to higher viral load. Hence the scale-up of TB screening and TB case-finding, IPT and TB infection control are key to contributing to long-term viral suppression for PLHIV on ART.

**Upcoming events**

Please find below details of upcoming events, offering further opportunities to increase the profile of TB/HIV. The conference headings provide links to the conference website. We encourage you to help ensure, where possible, that TB/HIV features on the agendas of these events by submitting abstracts, and organizing events.

**Women Deliver 4th Global Conference, 16-19 May 2016, Copenhagen, Denmark**

This conference will be the largest gathering of girls’ and women’s health and rights in the last decade and one of the first major global conferences following the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals. The focus of the conference will be on how to implement the SDGs so they matter most for girls and women, with a specific focus on health – in particular maternal, sexual, and reproductive health and rights – and on gender equality, education, environment, and economic empowerment. For the first time and as a key SDG cross-cutter, TB has been included as part of the main agenda in a session on the *Female Face of communicable Diseases* which is being organized by WHO’s Global TB Programme, in collaboration with UNAIDS and the Global Fund. For those of you attending the conference, we urge you to ensure TB is also mainstreamed within other sessions.

**United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on ending AIDS, New York, 8-10 June 2016**

In accordance with the UN General Assembly Resolution 70/228, the President of the United Nations General Assembly is convening a High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS from 8-10 June 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. As per the Resolution, the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Tuberculosis, whose Secretariat is based at WHO’s Global TB Programme, has been invited to participate in the meeting. At this meeting United Nations Member States will come together to draft a new Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS. In the lead-up to the meeting, communities of people living with HIV and key populations most affected by HIV, civil society, the private sector, governments and regional bodies will come together at a series of meetings and events to reaffirm the priorities for the future of the AIDS response and the important role it can play in achieving the SDGs.
**TB2016 17-18 July 2016, Durban, South Africa**

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is organizing TB2016, a two-day conference dedicated to TB from 17-18 July 2016, immediately preceding AIDS2016, in Durban, South Africa. The TB2016 conference objectives include: 1) galvanizing political leadership and commitment to end TB by 2035 through intensified implementation and identifying and inspiring the future generation of TB activists and leaders 2) bringing together experts to advance knowledge and innovation about TB, present new research findings; debate controversies; and promote and enhance scientific and community collaboration 3) promoting and sharing best practices and aspirations to reinvigorate and expand the global TB response to address the challenges and global security threat of multi-drug resistant TB. Registration to TB2016 is now open. **Deadline for submission of abstracts is 1 April 2016**

**AIDS 2016, 18-22 July 2016, Durban, South Africa**

AIDS2016 is expected to convene over 20,000 delegates from around the world and aims to reinvigorate the response to HIV and AIDS. Scientists, policy makers, world leaders and people living with HIV will discuss successes and challenges in addressing HIV-associated TB and the current global epidemic trends. Registration to AIDS2016 is now open. **Deadline for late breaker abstract submissions is 12 May 2016.**

**The 47th Union World Conference, 26-29 October 2016, Liverpool, UK**

The Union conference theme this year is Confronting Resistance: Fundamentals to Innovations, addressing a number of critical areas for discussion, including the growing problem of resistance to existing TB drugs. More broadly, the theme is also the next natural step after 2015s “New Agenda” – confronting resistance to the new ideas and challenges that this agenda introduces to governments, business, communities, the healthcare system and individuals. **Deadline for submission of abstracts is 16th March 2016.**

If this update has been forwarded to you by a friend or colleague and you would like to receive more updates from us in the future, please e-mail us at tbhiv@who.int