



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

July 27, 2016

AL TSA: NH #2016-022
TUBERCULOSIS (TB) TESTING UPDATE

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

In 2013, Residential Care Services (RCS) distributed a Dear Provider letter indicating there was a temporary shortage of tuberculin skin test antigen solutions. During this time period, RCS revised the TB testing expectations in acknowledgement of the shortage. This shortage no longer applies and the current WAC expectations for TB testing in each program need to be followed. Here is the current testing standard for employees:

1. TB testing for staff must begin within 3 days of employment.
2. The provider may accept documentation for either a Mantoux (skin test) or an IGRA (blood test) to determine if an individual is positive or not.
3. For the skin test, a two-step process must be completed initially if the individual has no documentation a previous two-step process has ever been completed. Please note, a two-step testing process will require four visits. Please ensure staff review the requirements of a two-step process with the person conducting the test.
4. A repeated skin test or blood test may be done if an individual tests positive on the initial skin test.
5. If an individual states s/he had a positive reaction from a prior skin test, but has no documentation from that test, the provider should make sure that either a repeated skin test or a blood test is done.
6. If the individual comes from a country where TB may be prevalent the provider should make sure that a blood test is done. The individual can contact the Department of Health to obtain the most current list.
7. If either the skin or blood test results in an individual testing positive, that individual needs a chest x-ray and needs to follow the recommendations of their health care provider. *NOTE: An IGRA blood test is not an acceptable alternative to the chest x-ray required after a positive result from testing/screening.*
8. If an individual declines the skin test, s/he must take the blood test.
9. If an individual is diagnosed with TB, the local health department should be notified and the individual should follow all recommendations of their health care provider and the local health department
10. Staff who work for the same provider/corporation across multiple homes operated by that provider/corporation do not need to complete a separate TB test for each facility.
11. The nursing home must also ensure that facility personnel are tested annually.

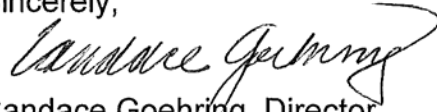
Dear NH Administrator

July 26, 2019

Page 2

RCS will periodically review the Washington Administrative Code to determine if the rules need to be revised to reflect any changes in TB testing standards. Please use the concepts above when reviewing, revising and implementing your infection control procedures around TB testing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Candace Goehring". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Candace Goehring, Director
Residential Care Services

"Transforming Lives"