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Toolkit to Evaluate Completion of Tuberculosis Therapy

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NYS has the third highest tuberculosis morbidity in the country, with 1,289 new cases reported in 2005. In 2003, 78.7% of eligible cases completed treatment within one year, which is slightly below the national average.

Significant decreases in federal funding to TB prevention and control programs over the past ten years have increased pressure to identify the most effective factors leading to treatment completion. As a result, evaluation has become a priority in an effort to create streamlined and cost-effective programs.

With this in mind, the New York State Department of Health Bureau for TB Control in conjunction with the CDC, designed an evaluation toolkit to assess progress towards objectives and provide evidence for factors contributing to success for both the state as a whole and county health departments individually.

The intent of this study was 1) to evaluate the state's progress towards meeting the federal objective of 90% completion of treatment in 12 months or less and 2) to identify programmatic factors associated with completing and not completing treatment.

Methods/Results

The charts of seventy-five TB cases reported from 2003-2005 were reviewed at five counties in upstate New York with five or more average cases per year. Ninety-one percent of cases completed treatment; of those, 94% completed within 12 months. Ninety-eight percent were evaluated and accepted for DOT. Only 53% kept all DOT appointments and 85% all clinical appointments. Eleven percent of patients do not have a permanent address and 25% do not have insurance.