

# City and County of San Francisco TB Control Section

## **Protocol for Treatment Interruption**

When treatment has been interrupted due to missed appointments, the TB staff attempts to locate the patient through:

- Home visits to known places of residence
- Phone and letter outreach to addresses, if available
- Contacting relatives, if known
- Leaving messages with other individuals who are involved with the patient, such as parole officer, shelter staff, HIV case manager

### **Protocols on re-starting latent TB infection treatment after interruption**

- This is a highly individualized program decision, weighing the costs of a TB case against the effort to keep individuals at highest risk for TB on a course of LTBI treatment
  - Flexibility is key, and group effort is imperative
  - Documentation of every effort to work with the patient allows the physician and supervisory staff information for objective decision-making should non-adherence continue
- Some LTBI treatment programs will restart the patient 2-3 times once treatment is interrupted, but discontinue program efforts if non-adherence persists

- In San Francisco, there is no limit on number of "re-starts" for LTBI treatment among the hardest-to-reach. The staff attempts to engage the patient repeatedly, unless the patient moves out of the jurisdiction and/or becomes lost to all contact

Failure to complete treatment is not attributable to any individual. Remember that treatment is a team effort with the patient, and any lost or non-adherent patient is not the responsibility of any one team member. In order to successfully complete treatment, the high-risk LTBI patient must be willing to work with the program staff and stay involved. TB program staff must document every effort made to locate the patient and alert collaborating agencies that may serve the patient.

- Establish a "Medical Alert" system, which flags patients in the shared electronic patient information system of the city and county community health network
- Collaborate with shelter staff who can alert TB program if "lost" patients arrive for services
- Collaborate with local jail health staff for help in LTBI treatment completion