

Competency Standards for Public Health Nurses providing Tuberculin Skin Testing

Purpose: provide standards to regional public health on the competencies required by health professionals who administer Tuberculin Skin Testing (TST) through the provision of communicable disease follow up.

Preamble: Health care providers and laboratories are required to confidentially notify Public Health of Tuberculosis cases. Public Health staff may investigate to find out how the infection occurred, identify other people who may be at risk of infection, implement control measures, ensure appropriate tests and treatment are provided, and provide advice as necessary. Tuberculosis contact investigation and follow-up may involve TST with some contacts.

Competency in TST practice is an individual professional responsibility and the responsibility of the employing agency. It is guided by professional practice standards, employer/organizational policies and evidence-based research.

Public health nurses within the regional health authority who provide TST through New Brunswick communicable disease follow up must demonstrate competency in the skills and knowledge required for safe and competent practice through completion of learning programs based on the *Canadian Tuberculosis Standards*.

Standards:

1. For the provision of communicable disease follow-up for Tuberculin Skin Testing (TST):
 - the administrative authority responsible must have in place quality control processes to ensure adherence to the conditions of the *Medical Directive for Tuberculin Skin Testing (TST)* and to the policies, standards and guidelines of the Reportable Disease Events Guidelines.
2. It is an expectation that the Regional Health Authority's policies in regards to the above mentioned topics will be shared with the Medical Officer of Health. As the medical authority signing the directive, he/she must be satisfied with the content and details of these policies.

Additional requirements:

- complete a TST learning program developed by the Regional Health Authority with theory and practice necessary to perform this skill;
- follow the policies, standards and guidelines of the [Reportable Disease Events Guidelines](#);
- demonstrate competency before practicing independently;
- be evaluated every two years.

