



ERNIE FLETCHER
GOVERNOR

Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Department for Public Health
Kentucky Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program
275 East Main Street, HS2E-B
Frankfort, Kentucky 40621-001
(502) 564-4276 (502) 564-3772 Fax

MARK D. BIRDWHISTELL
SECRETARY

February 20, 2007

Mr. Kevin M. Noland
Interim Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education
500 Mero Street
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Mr. Nolan:

The Tuberculosis Control Program is currently working to amend the current administrative Regulations as it relates to Tuberculin Skin Test. Presently, the current 704 KAR 4:020, school health services. Section 1 states that (1) a local board of education shall require a medical examination of each certified and classified employee, including each substitute teacher, prior to initial employment that shall include a tuberculosis (TB) skin test. In discussion of this Administrative Regulation with Ann Keating, attorney for the Board of Education, Ms. Keating advised information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Kentucky TB Control Program, as it relates to tuberculin skin tests (TST) be sent to you.

CDC recommendations for tuberculosis control are used by the Kentucky Department for Public Health to implement tuberculosis control strategies in the Commonwealth. In 2000, the CDC recommended *targeted tuberculin testing* for groups at risk and with risk factors for infection with *M. tuberculosis*. "Targeted tuberculin testing for latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) identifies persons at high risk for TB who would benefit by treatment of LTBI, if detected. Persons at high risk for TB (i.e., risk substantially greater than that of the general U.S. population) have either been infected recently with *M. tuberculosis* or have clinical conditions that are associated with an increased risk of progression of LTBI to active TB...screening of low-risk persons and testing for administrative purposes (e.g., certification of school teachers) should be replaced by targeted testing." <http://www.cdc.gov/MMWR/preview/MMWRhtml/rr4906a1.htm>

The Kentucky Revised Statute, KRS 214.034 – Immunization of children – Testing and treatment of children for tuberculosis has been amended effective July 15, 1998, deleting the requirement that children be tested for tuberculosis. Also deleted was the requirement that each child entering public schools have proof of having been tested for tuberculosis prior to enrollment.



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Administering a TB skin test on low risk persons has the potential for false positive results. The consequence of a false positive skin test subjects the individual to an unnecessary chest X-ray and being placed on medication for nine months that may cause liver damage in some people.

TB skin testing for administrative purposes has been often performed for foster care parents, day care workers, fire fighters, police, food service workers and school employees. This practice should be discontinued. Members of those groups should receive individual TB risk screening at their local health department. TST should be administered only to those individuals who are at increased risk for TB as identified by that screening. Attached for your information is the Protocol followed by health departments as it relates to TB Control, developed by Kentucky's TB Control Program.

Join the TB Control Program's efforts to decrease unnecessary skin testing for personnel in the educational system. It is through community partnerships that quality service and best practices to residents of the Commonwealth will be realized. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (502) 564-4276 or via email at Jodi.Davis@ky.gov.

Respectfully,

Jodi Davis, RN, MA
Nurse Consultant
Kentucky Tuberculosis Control Program

Linda Jackson, MA, ABD
Program Administrator
Kentucky Tuberculosis Control Program

Cc: Dr. Robert Brawley
Ann Keating
Karen Erwin
File

Attachment