Wisconsin Survey of Local Health Departments on COVID Impacts and Educational Needs: Results - June 2021

Claire Leback, RN MPH
Wisconsin TB Program
November 3, 2021
Approximately 20% decrease in case finding for tuberculosis (TB) (37% for multi-drug resistant-TB), due to:

- Decreased global movement
- Pandemic mitigation efforts (e.g., masking)
- Lower suspicion of TB
- Decreased access to health care
Other impacts...

Public health staff turnover

Reassignment from TB to COVID

Decreased TB/Latent TB infection (LTBI) services
WI TB Program Survey, June 2021
Purpose

Assess continuing impacts of COVID on local TB programs

Assess training needs as WI recovers from pandemic
10 QUESTIONS

Six related to TB staffing and services capacity

Three related to TB training needs

One related to demographics of respondents
Respondents

248 surveys completed total

Northern: 42
Western: 37
Northeastern: 74
Southern: 48
Southeastern: 46

A few from Minnesota (grouped with western); one from Illinois
How much of your time is currently spent doing COVID-19 related work?

65% of respondents reported over half of their time is spent doing COVID-19 related work.
Does your health department currently have nurses or other staff who are still dedicated to TB-related work?

75% of respondents reported still having dedicated TB staff.
Within the last year, have you had staff who were previously doing TB-related work who either retired or left the health department?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hardest hit: **Western, Southern, Northeastern**—about half reported losing a TB staffperson
What types of TB activities were stopped or decreased due to the COVID-19 response?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TB testing</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visits</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person directly observed therapy (DOT)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treating latent TB infection (LTBI)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB education</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for high risk TB groups</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What types of TB activities were stopped or decreased due to the COVID-19 response?

All regions (except southeastern) decreased or stopped home visits.

Northeastern, southeastern, and southern also often reported decreasing LTBI treatment (at least 30% of respondents).

Across the board—TB testing was decreased or stopped.
When do you think that your health department will be able to turn attention back to TB-related work (including home visits and DOT)?

Most (59%) were starting to at the time of survey or planning to within three months.
How can WTBP support LHDs refocus on TB?
When do you think that staff would be able to dedicate time to TB trainings or workshops?

Most (66%) were starting to at the time of the survey or planning to within three months.
What TB topics are of highest importance as far as training?

Out of 16 suggested topics:

- TB treatment
- Wisconsin TB Treatment Assistance Program
- LTBI treatment
- LTBI overview
- TB laboratory (specimens, forms, collection, shipping,...)
- Wisconsin TB Dispensary
- TB 101
- What to do with a new patient suspected to have TB
- TB case management
Webinars

TB 101 (August 24th)

Financial Assistance through the WI TB Program (Sept 14th)

Evaluation for TB Disease and TB Case Management (Sept 28th)

TB Lab (Oct 12th)

Recordings available at: https://vimeo.com/showcase/8771749
Conclusion

COVID continued to strain LHD TB resources.

Most LHDs were preparing to refocus on TB activities.

LHDs desired TB training on fundamentals, care management, evaluation, and financials.
TB Program Contact Information

Phone: 608-261-6319
Fax: 608-266-0049
Email: dhswitbprogram@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Website:
https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tb/index.htm