Overview of Tuberculosis in Los Angeles County

- In 2014, a total of 585 new tuberculosis (TB) disease patients were reported in Los Angeles County (LAC), an 11.5% decrease from 661 patients in 2013. The latest state surveillance data show that TB continues to decline in California, with LAC accounting for approximately 1/3 of TB cases in the state.\(^1\)
- In 2014, the incidence rate of TB in LAC was 6.2 per 100,000, which is the 10\(^{th}\) highest rate among California’s local health jurisdictions, higher than the overall state incidence rate (5.6/100,000),\(^1\) and more than twice the national incidence rate (3.0/100,000).\(^2\)

Racial/Ethnic Groups

- The TB incidence rate was highest among Asians, followed by Blacks, Hispanics, and non-Hispanic Whites (Figure 2).
- In 2014, TB patients were comprised of 259 (44%) Asian, 245 (42%) Hispanic, 47 (8%) Black, and 34 (6%) non-Hispanic White. From 2013 to 2014, the number of TB patients among Hispanics and Asians decreased by 16% and 5%, respectively.
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*Pasadena and Long Beach TB cases excluded because these two cities have their own TB Control Programs. LAC TB data last updated 7/15/15. Population estimates source: Internal Services Department, Los Angeles County.

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Patients Born Outside the U.S.
- In LAC, there were four times as many TB patients born outside the U.S. (n=465, 80%) than there were patients born in the U.S. (n=119, 20%). Among TB patients born outside the U.S., 78% (n=363) originated from seven countries: Mexico, Philippines, China, Vietnam, Korea, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Also, 84% (n=392) of TB patients born outside the U.S. reported having spent five or more years in the U.S. at the time of TB diagnosis.

Children and Older Adults
- There were 15 cases of TB among children ages 0 to 4 years, representing 2.6% of all TB patients reported in 2014. The 2014 incidence rate (2.5/100,000; Figure 3) exceeds the CDC 2020 target rate (0.3/100,000). TB among young children is an indicator of recent TB transmission.3
- Persons 65+ years old represented 33% (n=196) of TB cases in 2014. This age group had the highest rate of TB (17.3/100,000).

HIV and Other Medical Comorbidities
- In 2014, 40% (n=222) of adult (18+ years of age) TB patients had at least one medical comorbidity, such as diabetes mellitus, end-stage renal disease, or another immunosuppressive condition (not HIV). These comorbidities increase a person’s likelihood to progress from TB infection without symptoms to active TB disease.1 The most common comorbidity was diabetes mellitus (n=169 or 30% of adult TB patients).
- Among all patients with TB and known HIV status, 4.4% (n=23) were co-infected with HIV. People living with HIV are at high risk for rapid progression to TB disease.4

Homelessness
- Persons experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to TB. Factors such as crowded living situations, lack of access to health care, and delayed diagnosis increase the risk of transmission in this population. In 2014, there were 37 (6%) TB cases in LAC who reported experiencing homelessness within the past year.

Multidrug-Resistant (MDR) and Extensively Drug-Resistant (XDR) TB
- In 2014, there were four new MDR-TB cases and 1 new pre-XDR-TB case in LAC.
- Despite the significant increase of MDR-TB in some global regions,4 in LAC, the proportion of MDR-TB cases has remained relatively constant, averaging between 1% and 2% of TB cases during 2010-2014.
- Treatment of MDR-TB or XDR-TB is more complex, lengthy (1 ½ to 2 years), and costly than treatment of drug-susceptible TB.

Deaths among Persons with TB
- Among TB cases confirmed in 2010-2014, there were 302 (12%) deaths, including deaths due to TB and deaths unrelated to TB disease. Of these, 79% died while receiving TB treatment.

References