



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Department of Health observes World Tuberculosis Day

HONOLULU – In observance of World Tuberculosis Day on March 24, 2024, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) is highlighting tuberculosis (TB) as a continuing public health issue in Hawai'i.

In 2023 Hawai'i had 116 diagnosed cases of active TB, up from 100 cases in 2022. This increase parallels the global and mainland experience in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the presence of effective treatment, people continue to die from TB. In 2023 approximately 1.5 million people died from TB worldwide, with 16 of those deaths occurring in Hawai'i.

Hawai'i remains vigilant in its efforts to prevent the spread of this disease by performing extensive contact tracing and requiring testing for TB in certain industries. Testing is simple and provided free of charge through the DOH at 17 locations. For more information on how to get a TB Clearance, visit <https://health.hawaii.gov/tb/tb-testing-locations-times/>.

When detected early there are effective treatments for TB, which can prevent the severe and contagious form of the illness called active TB. Symptoms of active TB include a prolonged cough of three weeks or longer, unexplained weight loss, fever, sweating at night, loss of appetite, and feeling weak or tired. People with these symptoms are encouraged to get evaluated by their primary care physician. DOH has resources available to help individuals and clinicians diagnose and treat tuberculosis.

DOH has been working with various private and public partners to promote TB testing and treatment for our most vulnerable community members: immigrants, migrants, and those living in group settings such as homeless shelters and people who are incarcerated. Through these

collaborative efforts with our community partners, the DOH TB Control Program seeks to prevent late diagnoses, lasting lung damage and deaths, and to end transmission of this infection in our communities. These efforts work toward the global public health goal of ending TB for all.

The Hawai'i Department of Health Tuberculosis Control Program is part of the Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Division. Its mission is to reduce the incidence of tuberculosis in the state by providing effective prevention, detection, treatment and educational services. Examinations and treatment are available free of charge.

For more information on tuberculosis or the program's services and activities, call 808-832-5731 or visit <https://health.hawaii.gov/tb/>.

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