

Avon Tuberculosis Clinic  
Dr S. Mungall BMBS, MRCP  
Associate Specialist in TB and Respiratory Medicine

Secretary : 0117 342 3485 (voicemail in use)  
Fax : 0117 342 4262  
Community TB Nurses Tel: 0117 954 3066

DEPARTMENT OF RESPIRATORY MEDICINE  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Offices  
Dolphin House  
Bristol Royal Infirmary  
Marlborough Street  
Bristol  
BS2 8HW

Dear GP,

The face of TB in the South West is changing.  
Over half of cases are UK born, and an increasing proportion has social risk factors

## ALWAYS THINK TB

Investigation is simple - order a CXR, send sputum for TB culture and contact the TB team.

I am writing to you on behalf of the Bristol TB Service. Currently the South West is one of the worst performing regions in terms of delay between TB symptom onset and starting treatment.

Late presentation results in disease that is harder to treat as well as very complex contact tracing exercises.

We want to change this situation and to do that requires that we diagnose cases earlier. We are employing a number of strategies locally, but would particularly like to draw GP's attention to changes in the type of typical cases we are seeing.

The demographic profile of TB patients is changing. **While anyone can get TB, in Bristol, we are seeing increased numbers of TB cases in the UK born population. In particular we are seeing more UK born patients with social risk factors, such as homelessness, drug misuse and previous imprisonment.** These patients tend to present later with more advanced infectious disease. Any delay in diagnosis further compounds the issues.

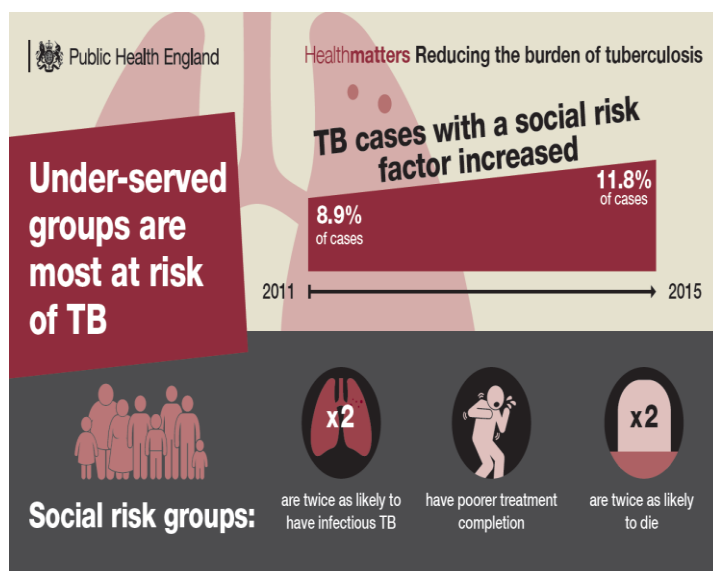
Often the most underserved populations have chaotic lifestyles that mean they present late and are erratic about attending for x-rays or providing samples. **We are happy to work with you to support "pre diagnosis patients" you are concerned about,** and will try to encourage patients to attend for x rays and do sputum samples where possible.

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Please telephone or e-mail the TB nurses for advice and information on referral.



**Bristol Tuberculosis Nurse Service  
Lawrence Hill Health Centre**

e-mail: [bristoltb nurse@nhs.net](mailto:bristoltb nurse@nhs.net)

**Tel: 0117 9543066  
Fax: 0117 9557750**

Yours sincerely

**Dr Sarah Mungall  
Associate Specialist in Respiratory Medicine and TB Lead**

cc. Mike Wade, Deputy Director of Health Protection, Public Health England South West  
cc. Dr A. Leahy, Consultant Respiratory Physician, BRI  
cc. Dr B Bovill, Consultant Infectious Diseases Physician, Southmead Hospital  
cc. Dr J Calvert, Consultant Respiratory Physician, Southmead Hospital  
cc. TB Nurses, Lawrence Hill Health Centre.