Latent TB testing and treatment

A practical guide for commissioners and practitioners

To test for latent TB infection (LTBI):
- identify eligible individuals registered or registering with a GP practice
- rule out active TB through a brief history and symptom check
- if active TB suspected, refer to local TB services immediately
- perform a single blood test and send for interferon gamma release assay
- follow local arrangements for blood bottles, forms and couriers
- offer HIV test to risk groups of dual infection and other blood-borne virus tests according to local protocols

Eligibility for LTBI testing:
- migrants, aged 16-35 years, who have entered the UK from a high incidence country (≥150 per 100,000 or Sub-Saharan Africa, see map) within the last 5 years and had been previously living there for ≥6 months

If your patient is LTBI positive:
- perform the clinical work-up including routine bloods, liver function tests and a chest X-Ray prior to treatment initiation as per local pathways
- refer to secondary care for LTBI treatment with either:
  - 3 months rifampicin/isoniazid combination therapy
  - 6 months isoniazid monotherapy

How to keep records of patients tested:
- enter data carefully; this is vital for monitoring the programme and a contractual requirement
- use the embedded template on your GP system (EMIS web or SystmOne); if a template has not been developed or you are on a different system, please use the online form
- a TB nurse will usually add treatment data to a web-based platform
- the data will be held securely by Public Health England for monitoring and evaluation
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