



## News Release

### TB rates in Kent, Surrey and Sussex

New figures show numbers of tuberculosis (TB) cases reported in Kent, Surrey and Sussex in 2012 fell from 351 in 2011 to 330 by the end of 2012, The figures are published today (Tuesday) in Public Health England's (PHE) annual report: *TB in the UK: 2013*.

This represents an overall rate of 7.4 cases per 100,000 population across the Kent, Surrey and Sussex against a national average rate of 14 cases per 100,000. Highest rates were recorded in Gravesham (Kent) with 21 cases (a rate of 20.6; Woking in Surrey, with 17 cases (rate 17.1) and Crawley in Sussex with 17 cases (rate 15.9).

London continued to carry the burden of infection in 2012, with 3,426 cases accounting for almost 40 per cent of the UK total, followed by the West Midlands with 12 per cent. As in previous years, almost three quarters of cases were in people born in countries where TB is more common. Of those born abroad, the majority of cases were from South Asia (60 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (22 per cent).

Rates of TB have stabilised nationally at around 14 cases per 100,000 since the mid-2000s, following the increase in incidence seen in the previous two decades. However, despite considerable efforts to improve prevention, treatment and control, TB incidence in the UK remains high compared to most other Western European countries.

In the UK-born population, those most at risk remain individuals from ethnic minority groups, those with social risk factors such as a history of homelessness, imprisonment or problem use of drugs or alcohol, and the elderly.

Dr Graham Bickler, Kent, Surrey and Sussex Public Health England Centre Director, said: "TB is a preventable and treatable condition but, if left untreated, it can be life threatening. Efforts to control the spread of this infection must remain a public health priority. Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment are key to reducing TB levels in the UK so we encourage local health service commissioners to prioritise the delivery of appropriate clinical and public health services for TB, especially in areas where TB rates are highest.

"To reduce the risk of active TB disease in people coming to the UK from high incidence countries, it is essential that new migrants have good access to screening and diagnostic services. Ensuring that NICE guidance on screening for latent TB infection is implemented in a coordinated manner across the country is therefore very important."

Dr Paul Cosford, Director for Health Protection and Medical Director at PHE, said: "TB remains an important public health problem, particularly in London and among people from vulnerable communities. We have therefore made TB one of the key priorities for PHE and

are working with key stakeholders to oversee the development of a stronger national approach to TB control.

“This will have at its heart support to local clinical, preventive and social care services in the NHS, local government and wider health and social care system. We are determined to see a sustained reduction in TB, and will work tirelessly to support local partners in those areas where the burden is greatest.”

**Number of new TB notifications and rates per 100,000 population in Kent, Surrey and Sussex 2011 and 2012 by Local Authority**

Local authority	2011		2012	
KENT	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Ashford	13	11.0	9	7.6
Canterbury	16	10.6	15	9.9
Dartford	15	15.4	10	10.3
Dover	8	7.2	3	2.7
Gravesham	17	16.7	21	20.6
Maidstone	3	1.9	9	5.8
Sevenoaks	6	5.2	7	6.1
Shepway	8	7.4	15	13.9
Swale	3	2.2	1	0.7
Thanet	7	5.2	9	6.7
Tonbridge & Malling	5	4.1	6	5.0
Tunbridge Wells	6	5.2	6	5.2
<b>SURREY</b>				
Elmbridge	6	4.6	5	3.8
Epsom & Ewell	8	10.7	8	10.7
Guildford	13	9.5	9	6.6
Mole Valley	0	0.0	1	1.2
Reigate & Banstead	8	5.8	18	13.1
Runnymede	7	8.7	6	7.5
Spelthorne	12	12.6	6	6.3
Surrey Heath	6	7.0	5	5.8
Tandridge	1	1.2	2	2.4
Waverley	10	8.2	10	8.2
Woking	24	24.2	17	17.1
<b>SUSSEX</b>				
Adur	2	3.3	3	4.9
Arun	6	4.0	5	3.3
Chichester	1	0.9	6	5.3
Crawley	25	23.5	17	15.9
Eastbourne	5	5.0	6	6.0
Hastings	11	12.2	10	11.1
Horsham	4	3.0	4	3.0
Lewes	2	2.1	8	8.2
Mid Sussex	8	5.7	4	2.9
Rother	1	1.1	2	2.2
Wealden	5	3.4	8	5.4
Worthing	9	8.6	8	7.6
<b>Brighton &amp; Hove UA</b>	25	9.1	32	11.7
<b>Medway UA</b>	28	10.6	19	7.2

**Notes to editors:**

1. PHE Tuberculosis in the UK Report (2013) – an embargoed copy of the report is available from the press office or at the following link from <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Publications/InfectiousDiseases/Tuberculosis/1308TBintheUK2013report/>
2. TB is an infection caused by bacteria. It usually affects the lungs, but can affect other parts of the body. TB is transmitted when someone who has the infection coughs or sneezes, but it requires close prolonged contact in order to spread from person to person. For more information about tuberculosis, please visit: <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/Tuberculosis/>
3. Public Health England's mission is to protect and improve the nation's health and to address inequalities through working with national and local government, the NHS, industry and the voluntary and community sector. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health.

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