



## News Release

### TB rates in Wessex – Annual report

New figures show numbers of tuberculosis (TB) cases reported in Wessex in 2012 fell from 189 in 2011 to 171 by the end of 2012. The figures are published today (Tuesday) in Public Health England's annual report: *TB in the UK: 2013*.

This represents an overall rate of 6.5 cases per 100,000 population across Wessex (Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and Dorset) against a national average rate of 14 cases per 100,000.

The highest rates were recorded in Rushmoor with 32 cases (a rate of 34.1 per 100,000 population) and Southampton with 39 cases (a rate of 16.5 per 100,000 population). Lowest rates were in Winchester and Test Valley with one case and a rate of 0.9 per 100,000 each.

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 Jim O'Brien, Wessex 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.

He added that it was essential for new migrants to the UK who may have come from high incidence countries to have good access to screening and diagnostic services to reduce the risk of active TB disease.

“Ensuring that NICE recommendations on screening for latent TB infection are 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.”

**New notifications of TB and rates per 100,000 in Wessex to end of 2011 and 2012 by Local Authority area**

Local authority	2011		2012	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Basingstoke and Deane	14	8.3	9	5.4
Bournemouth UA	24	13.1	20	10.9
Christchurch	2	4.2	2	4.2
East Dorset	1	1.1	5	5.7
East Hampshire	3	2.6	3	2.6
Eastleigh	4	3.2	4	3.2
Fareham	3	2.7	6	5.4
Gosport	8	9.7	2	2.4
Hart	3	3.3	2	2.2
Havant	1	0.8	3	2.5
Isle of Wight UA	6	4.3	7	5.1
New Forest	6	3.4	2	1.1
North Dorset	2	2.9	4	5.8
Poole UA	2	1.4	3	2.0
Portsmouth UA	17	8.3	23	11.2
Purbeck	2	4.4	1	2.2
Rushmoor	28	29.9	32	34.1
Southampton UA	51	21.5	39	16.5
Test Valley	5	4.3	1	0.9
West Dorset	2	2.0	1	1.0
Weymouth and Portland	1	1.5	1	1.5
Winchester	4	3.4	1	0.9

**Notes to editors:**

1. PHE Tuberculosis in the UK Report (2013) is available from the following link:  
<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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**MORE INFORMATION:**

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