MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrator, Retirement Homes in York Region

FROM: Dr. Lilian Yuan

DATE: April 2, 2013

RE: **Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Recommendations for Residents**

The new regulations in the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010* require retirement homes to screen residents for tuberculosis (TB) prior to admission. This letter provides recommendations regarding the <u>screening of residents</u> for TB in retirement homes in The Regional Municipality of York.

According to the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010,* Ontario Regulation 166/11, Section 27 (8 b), the licensee shall ensure that the following screening measures are in place:

"The licensee of a retirement home shall ensure that each resident is screened for tuberculosis within 14 days of commencing residency in the home, unless the resident has been screened not more than 90 days before commencing residency and the documented results of the screening are available to the licensee."

Recommendations for TB Screening for Residents of Retirement Homes

York Region Community and Health Services Public Health recommends the following in order to screen residents for TB disease prior to admission to the retirement home:

1. **Chest x-ray:** A chest x-ray (posterior-anterior and lateral) taken within 90 days prior to admission to the facility. If the x-ray was not done within 90 days prior to admission, it should be taken within 14 days of admission. A copy of the x-ray report must be provided to the home.

2. **Medical assessment:** A physical assessment and symptom review by a physician/nurse practitioner to rule out active pulmonary TB should be done within 90 days prior to admission, or within 14 days of admission, to ensure that signs and symptoms of active TB are absent. A checklist for the review of symptoms and chest x-ray findings is enclosed and can be used in your pre-admission medical assessment forms.

If signs and symptoms and/or the chest x-ray indicate potential active pulmonary disease, the resident should not be admitted until three sputum samples taken at least eight hours apart are submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for testing (Acid Fast Bacilli and Culture) and the results are negative. It can take up to eight weeks for a final culture report.

3. **TST (less than 65 years old only):** In addition to the above, for residents less than 65 years of age who are previously skin test negative or unknown, a two-step tuberculin skin test (TST) is recommended.

   A TST is not recommended for residents who are 65 years of age or older, or those who have had a previously positive TST. For residents with a prior TST result, the latest result should be recorded in mm, including the date the TST was administered.

4. **Transfers:** Prior to transfer from another facility, a physical assessment and symptom review of the resident by a physician/nurse practitioner to rule out active pulmonary TB is recommended. In addition, the chest x-ray previously done upon admission or any more recent radiology should be reviewed. If there is any indication of possible active TB, a repeat chest x-ray, sputum testing and any other necessary investigations should be done to rule out active pulmonary TB disease before the resident is transferred.

Included in this letter is more information about TB screening including:

- An Active TB Screening Checklist for Clinicians, that may be sent to health care providers as part of the pre-admission medical assessment forms

- Recommendations for Tuberculosis (TB) Screening in Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes

- Frequently Asked Questions: Tuberculosis (TB) Screening in Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes.

These documents are also available on The Regional Municipality of York's web page at www.york.ca/tb.

If you have any questions regarding TB screening, please contact the TB Program at 1-877-464-9675, extension 76000.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Dr. Lilian Yuan

Dr. Lilian Yuan
MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Associate Medical Officer of Health

Attachments: Recommendations for Residents
                 Active TB Screening Checklist for Clinicians
                 Frequently Asked Questions