

Tuberculosis among Toronto's Homeless and Underhoused Community in 2013

A total of three cases of tuberculosis (TB) were diagnosed in 2013 among Toronto's homeless/underhoused community. All three cases were males with pulmonary tuberculosis. One case was Canadian-born, and the other two cases were born outside of Canada- one in the United States (USA) and the other in India (Table 1). All three cases had fully sensitive strains of TB.

Toronto cases were included in this summary if they were diagnosed with tuberculosis in 2013; and their risk setting was "shelter" or "homeless shelter day drop-in/day program use", or risk factor was "underhoused/homeless". This includes cases with historical use of shelters currently living in rooming houses.

Method of Detection: Two cases self-presented for medical attention due to symptoms and one case was identified post-mortem.

Outcomes: As of July 15 2014, one case is still on treatment. The second case died soon after diagnosis with tuberculosis as a contributing factor but not the underlying cause of death; this case had diabetes, inadequate nutritional status, and an underlying mental health condition. The third case was a post-mortem case with tuberculosis as the underlying cause of death.

Variable	N (%)
Gender	
Male	3 (100)
Average age at diagnosis (range)	50 (51-65)
Site of infection	
Pulmonary only	3 (100)
Origin	
Canadian-born non Aboriginal	1 (33)
Born Outside of Canada	2 (67)

Contact Follow-up: The homeless/underhoused cases reported in 2013 had a total of 43 contacts reported (mean of 14 contacts/case). Of the 43 contacts, 42 were located, and 30 had some sort of testing (either a skin test and/or a chest x-ray and/or a sputum sample). Three of five eligible contacts started prophylactic therapy.

In addition to case management and contact follow-up, the homeless and corrections TB team also provided 31 TB education sessions at specific homeless shelters and drop-ins.