



News from the Office of
ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

NEWS RELEASE

Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein

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March 24, 2013 is World Tuberculosis Day

Multi Drug Resistant Strains Continue to Challenge Available Treatments

ERIE COUNTY, NY— The Erie County Department of Health (“ECDOH”) supports World Tuberculosis Day on March 24 2013, designed to build public awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease. Today TB causes the deaths of about 1.7 million people each year. “World TB Day provides the opportunity to raise awareness about TB-related problems and solutions and to support worldwide TB-control efforts. While great strides have been made to control and cure TB, this disease is still a problem and more should be done so that one day TB is eliminated” **said Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein.** “The fight to stop TB will only be successful if local, state, national, and international partners from all sectors of our society join resources and collaborate to find solutions.”

Last year Erie County’s Tuberculosis Clinic evaluated 3,737 and treated 19 individuals for active TB disease. In 2012 New York State again ranked third in number of TB cases, and its case rate (4.5/100,000) continues to be one of the highest in the country. In 2012, 866 cases were reported statewide, a 4.8 percent decrease from a total of 910 cases in 2011. Twenty one of these cases were new multidrug-resistant TB cases.

Treatment for TB depends on whether a person has active TB disease or only latent TB infection. If medications for TB are not taken correctly, the TB infection may be harder to cure, especially if it has become drug resistant. TB that is resistant to more than one drug, called multidrug-resistant TB (MDR TB), is very dangerous because multiple drugs used to treat TB cannot fight the TB germs in the body. An even more dangerous version of MDR TB is extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR TB) because so many of the most effective TB drugs cannot cure the infection.

For more information on Erie County’s TB Clinic:

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=tuberculosis-tb>

For more information on TB: <http://www.cdc.gov/tb/>