This TB Strategy Toolkit aims to assist national TB plan development or refinement by providing up-to-date guidance on core components of a TB Action Plan or Strategy by bringing together the latest EU/EEA-focused evidence and expert opinion.

Introduction

Under the auspices of the global TB strategy and post-2015 milestones and goals, including TB elimination in low incidence settings, a coordinated and coherent approach to national TB control is fundamental to delivery.

A more targeted and supportive approach is required to ensure that EU/EEA member states develop evidence-based national action plans or strategies. These should include ambitious, context-specific goals, which account for EU/EEA-specific TB epidemiology and some of the structural, financial and political barriers.

TB incidence continues to decline across the EU and EEA and this can in part be attributed to timely diagnosis and prompt initiation of treatment of infectious TB cases. Despite this, projected trends suggest that an intensification of TB control efforts is needed to improve access to high quality care, which will primarily improve health outcomes for treated patients, and indirectly achieve public health impact.

EU member states are affected by changes in migration patterns into and within EU/EEA settings, bringing increasing social and political impact. Programmes and interventions which support integrated care and prevention and target immediate health and social needs highlight the importance of targeted screening programmes to identify TB and LTBI in high risk groups.

Aim

This TB Strategy Toolkit aims to assist national TB plan development or refinement by providing up-to-date guidance on core components of a TB Action Plan or Strategy by bringing together the latest EU/EEA-focused evidence and expert opinion.

Methods

Survey of plans and strategies

Evidence review

Expert meeting

TB strategy toolkit

Online survey of 31 EU/EEA member states

National TB programme leads and other TB experts

Effectiveness of interventions and barriers to implementation

Based on evidence, expert views and experience in EU/EEA countries

Results

FOUR options were selected as they are both relevant to TB control and prevention action plans and strategies but difficult to implement:


Discussion

National strategic planning is a core component of a national TB programme and provides the over-arching framework for the operationalisation of key activities and functions to tackle TB control and prevention priorities.

This TB Strategy Toolkit focuses on helping to prioritise core components of TB control, such as reaching out to under-served groups, targeted screening for active TB and latent TB infection in high risk groups, implementing electronic TB case registries and tackling MDR-TB care and control. This TB Strategy Toolkit should:

1. provide a point-of-reference for EU and EEA-specific priority areas of intervention for TB control and prevention to facilitate implementation

2. support national level planning and resource allocation based on peer-reviewed evidence and primary data

3. provide support for mobilising high-level political commitment and for engaging with stakeholder groups

As part of their national TB strategy, each Member State will need a consolidated approach to stimulate actors and key implementers who are pivotal to implement locally-relevant solutions in areas where there is high unmet need and where greatest reductions in incidence can be achieved. The development of national plans are dependent on well-budgeted plans to strengthen cases for national and international financing. Involving all stakeholders with budgetary responsibilities for TB prevention and care, including social protection, national surveillance, and research will support the mobilisation of resources, upon which to implement the goals and vision of a national strategic plan.