
FUTURE REPORTING OF TUBERCULOSIS IN AUSTRALIA

In 1985, a decision was made by the Australian Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory Network (AMRLN) to report laboratory data on bacteriologically-confirmed cases of tuberculosis in persons living in Australia, and emphasising documentation of drug resistance. This was seen by the network as an important concern for Australian public health. The National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System and AMRLN reports have been published in parallel.

In 1995, I attended a national tuberculosis (TB) meeting in Canberra; on the agenda was the topic of unifying the databases. Despite multiple attempts to merge the databases to allow a unified report to be prepared regarding Australian TB cases, success eluded the efforts to do so. Fast forward to 2014, and the roadblocks have been resolved. A

report on the combined data for 2012 and 2013 will be published soon in CDI. It will allow for much faster publishing of annual Australian TB data. Furthermore, it should enable different questions to be answered, that hitherto, could not be, and will possibly provide useful information to high burden countries in our region.

On behalf of the AMRLN, we congratulate those involved in developing the unified database and look forward to reading more comprehensive reports on Australian tuberculosis cases.

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