

September 21, 2023

Subject: Tuberculosis screening of certain workers in Nunavik – Interim recommendations from the Department of Public Health

Dear Sir/Madam:

Tuberculosis is an infectious disease that can be contracted by inhaling micro-droplets (airborne) contaminated by a person with active TB. This disease is more frequently observed in Nunavik than elsewhere in Québec. The following recommendations concern Nunavik workers whose jobs are known to increase their risk of exposure to tuberculosis.

These people include:

- Health care workers or social services workers who are in contact with clients/patients
- Workers in the prison environment (e.g., police officers, patrol officers, prison guards/correctional officers)
- Persons who work with the homeless

The Nunavik Department of Public Health therefore recommends that these three groups of workers undergo tuberculosis screening. This procedure can consist of a TST (TB skin test or tuberculin skin test) or any other accepted screening test, and this at the moments indicated in Table 1 on the following page. These recommendations are in addition to the other basic respiratory hygiene and other prevention measures² in the workplace.³

Appendix 1 lists resources that offer such screening in the South of Québec. Please provide a copy of this letter to each of your workers to whom it applies.

¹ Let's End TB in Nunavik | Regional Board of Health and Social Services (nrbhss.ca)

² Workplaces | Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (nrbhss.ca)

³ <u>Basic respiratory hygiene</u>: Stay at home when you present with flu symptoms. Otherwise, wear a mask at all times when in the presence of other people. This face covering can be a mask certified as compliant with ASTM F2100 standards (level 1, 2 or 3), or EN 14683 type IIR or BNQ 1922-900. It can also be a respiratory protection device (RPD) such as a disposable N95 respirator or other face covering that offers superior respiratory protection, as defined in CSA Z94.4-11. Remember to ventilate the room (let in fresh air), sneeze in your elbow and practice regular handwashing.



Table 1. Recommendations for TB screening of workers at risk in Nunavik

Timeframe (for TST)	Recommendations
Prior to beginning work in the	Have the workers who will shortly begin their assignment undergo a basic TB skin test (TST).
North (or during the	- Workers who have never had a 2-step TB skin test (TST): have these workers undergo a 2-step TST.
first 2 months	- Workers who have already had a 2-step TB skin test (TST) or whose most recent
of	TST was performed less than a year earlier: have these workers undergo a single
employment)	TST.
While	Recommend that these workers undergo a TB skin test (TST) every 2 years (maximum
employed	frequency of 1 TST per year).
Post-	Have these workers undergo a TB skin test (TST) 8 weeks after the end of their
employment	employment if their job entailed working for a cumulative period of at least 1 month.

For any questions regarding these recommendations, please contact the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services' Infection diseases team at the following email address: tuberculose-santepublique.nrbhss@ssss.gouv.qc.ca.

Should your organization want further information on the general risk of contracting an infectious disease in the workplace, please contact the occupational health team at the following e-mail address: healthatwork17@ssss.gouv.qc.ca.

Note that employees of your organization with questions regarding their specific situation may need to speak to their manager or your health office.

Sincerely,

Faisca Richer, MD, MSc, CMSQ, FRCPC

Interim Director of Public Health

Skrisca Ficher

Nunavik Department of Public Health - NRBHSS



APPENDIX 1

TB testing resources for persons living outside of Nunavik

(some services may be subject to a fee)

Option 1: Clic Santé (online): Accueil | Portail Clic Santé (clicsante.ca)

- To obtain an appointment using this online system, follow the steps below.
 - 1. Under Select a Category: click on Blood Test, Screening and Specimens.
 - 2. Under Select a Subcategory: click on Tests and Screening (the down arrow).
 - 3. Click on Select this Service.
 - 4. Under Select a Location: enter your postal code.
 - 5. Select a service provider from the list displayed and check whether TB screening tests are available. If not, check what other service providers might offer this test.
 - 6. When you identify a service provider that offers TB screening tests, make an appointment and answer the questions when prompted.

Option 2: Several private clinics (e.g., travel health clinics) also offer TB screening services.

Resources to obtain a clinical evaluation following a positive screening result for persons outside of Nunavik

McGill International TB Centre

Medical clinic, room DRC.3314 (MUCH Glen site) 1001, boul. Décarie Montréal, QC H4A 3J1

Telephone: 514 934-1934, ext. 32588

Clinic for the treatment of Latent Tuberculosis Infection (LTBI)

https://www.ciusss-capitalenationale.gouv.qc.ca/sante-publique/maladies-infectieuses/itl

Hôpital Jeffery Hale 1250, chemin Sainte-Foy Québec, QC G1S 2M6 1st floor, room 223-D Telephone: 418 666-1626

Fax: 418 656-4832

*A reference form (to fill out) can be obtained on their Web site (in French only at this time):

https://www.ciusss-

capitalenationale.gouv.gc.ca/sites/d8/files/docs/SantePublique/DSPub_Reference_clinTB.pdf