

TUBERCULOSIS

Must a physician report tuberculosis?

Yes. Tuberculosis is a notifiable condition which must be reported immediately to the local health department.¹ See NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS. Moreover, physicians must maintain responsibility for deciding the date of discharge for hospitalized tuberculosis patients and must notify the local health department of intended discharge of tuberculosis patients in order to assure that appropriate outpatient arrangements are made.²

Can a physician be penalized for failing to file a report of tuberculosis?

Yes. Failure to file the required report could subject a physician to civil liability if the failure to file is the proximate cause of an actionable injury. Also, failure to make a required report could constitute unprofessional conduct³ which may subject a physician to disciplinary action.

Must a physician who provides HIV post-test counseling to a patient refer the patient for tuberculosis screening?

Yes. A physician who provides HIV post-test counseling to a patient when the patient's test result is positive or indeterminate, or when the patient reports the practice of high-risk behavior, must refer the patient for tuberculosis screening.⁴ See AIDS/HIV/STD.

¹ RCW 70.28.010, WAC 246-100-211(1)(a), WAC 246-101-101.

² WAC 246-100-211(3)(b), WAC 246-101-105(8), (9).

³ RCW 18.130.180(11).

⁴ WAC 246-100-209(g).