



**Ethics of Tuberculosis
Prevention, Care and
Control**

**MODULE 8: HEALTH CARE WORKER
RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

[INSERT SPEAKER NAME
DATE &
LOCATION HERE]

Insert
country/ministry
logo here

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Discuss the ethical obligations health care workers have to care for patients at risk of or those with TB
- Describe the rights of health care workers who care for patients at risk of or those with TB

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International Standards for TB Care

Emphasises responsibility of providers:

- Be aware of individual and population risk factors
- Reduce diagnostic delay

International Standards for TB Care, Third Edition, 2014

USAID TB CARE II PROJECT 3

Ethical principles and health care worker obligations to care for TB patients

- Ethical obligation to provide care to patients
- Limits to degree of risk that can be reasonably expected
- May have multiple obligations that must be balanced against their job-related duties

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Ethical principles and health care worker obligations to care for TB patients

- Should not be expected to assume risks:
 - That can be avoided by the adoption of basic infection control measures
 - When there is no reasonable possibility of benefit for those for whom they are providing care
- Obligations must also consider **reciprocal obligations** of governments and health care facilities to provide minimum standards of safety

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Risks vs. responsibilities

Legitimate expectation for health care worker to care for patients with TB when provided with:

- Reasonable training
- Supplies
- Equipment
- Infrastructure
- Support
- Access to proven methods of care and treatment

Governments have an obligation to ensure that support is provided

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Dealing with greater risks

- Expectations may not be appropriate if health care workers' risk of contracting TB infection high
 - Unless working conditions adequately protect from TB exposure
- If at heightened risk of danger:
 - Attempt to ensure that patients are not abandoned
 - Transfer patient responsibilities to other providers

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GROUP

Let's discuss...

What potential gaps and challenges could prevent HCWs from being protected when managing people at risk of or those with TB?

- Divide into groups, based on instructions
- Move to the place designated for your group
- Nominate a spokesperson, note-taker and timekeeper for the group
- Read through the question and information provided in the section titled 'Setting the Scene' in the Health Care Worker Rights and Obligations: Activity 4 Delegate Hand-out
- Discuss the question in your small group
- Prepare a group response in preparation for the plenary discussion

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Reciprocal obligations to health care workers

- Provide training, equipment, and protection
- Give skills and information necessary to assess risks so that proper precautions may be taken
- Provide access to TB diagnosis, including TB screening, for those living with HIV
- Identify and treat those with active TB, using the best proven treatment

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Reciprocal obligations to health care workers (continued)

- Clearly articulate:
 - Expectations about the working conditions
 - Specific roles they are expected to assume
 - Risks inherent in those situations
- Appropriately compensate for services:
 - Danger pay and insurance for themselves and their families
 - Disability pay for those who become infected

Health care worker obligations when reciprocal obligations are unfulfilled

- Not unethical to decide not to work
- System, not the individual worker, that is ethically responsible
- Appeal to those in a position to make changes
- Governments and healthcare systems have an obligation to ensure that care can be provided safely