



Campaign copy for ARNS

NEW NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

TB Alert has launched a new campaign, backed by the *Department of Health*, to assist nurses in raising awareness of tuberculosis, primarily among at risk groups – including those from BME groups such as the Somali, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, as well as individuals with poorer health and immune systems - including those with HIV, homeless people, prisoners/ex-prisoners and older people.

For over 20 years TB has been rising in England, and there are now nearly 8,000 new cases each year.

Raising awareness of TB was the first action in the Chief Medical Officer's national action plan (2004) to combat the disease – and can lead to earlier diagnosis and treatment, reduced patient stigma and increased treatment completion rates. In short, effective communication and information provision can help reduce TB rates, with significant health and economic benefits.

The campaign aims to drive up awareness of the key TB symptoms: a cough that lasts for more than 3 weeks, fatigue, fever, unexplained loss of weight, night sweats, and lack of appetite.

Nurses are encouraged to use the new DVD, website (www.thetruthabouttb.org) and symptom checker cards to raise awareness of TB symptoms in patient consultations, practice waiting rooms and community talks. A range of leaflets, translated into 20 different languages, are also available which provide useful 'take home' clinical information for people diagnosed with TB.

For more information

Visit www.thetruthabouttb.org, or contact Tessa Marshall on 01273 234770 / info@tbalert.org.

To order the DVD or other resources, please phone 01273 234029 or email resources@tbalert.org.

TB Alert was founded on World TB Day 1999 and is the only TB-specific charity working in the UK. It was set up by people who felt that with its long tradition of TB work, there should be a greater response in Britain as well as overseas to the resurgent threat of tuberculosis. The vision of *TB Alert* is the control and ultimate eradication of TB, and the charity's mission is to increase access to effective treatment for all. *TB Alert*'s objectives are: to increase access to treatment, to improve the effectiveness of treatment, and to ensure that the most structurally and socially disadvantaged people are not missed out of TB programmes.