

Multilingual DVD on Tuberculosis: 'BREATHING SPACE'

Dr Jeremy McNulty, Associate Director, Communicable Diseases Branch of NSW Department of Health, launched a new multilingual DVD resource about the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis (TB) 'Breathing Space' at Westmead Hospital on Wednesday 24th of March 2010 - World TB Day.

With a large number of refugees to Australia coming from Africa, South East Asia and the Middle East where communicable diseases including TB are highly prevalent and health care services are limited, there is a constant challenge for health care providers addressing the specific health needs, beliefs and cultural barriers to health care for this population.

The NSW Refugee Health Service (RHS), in collaboration with Parramatta Chest Clinic, undertook research on attitudes and beliefs toward tuberculosis among newly arrived refugees from the African continent, Iraq and Burma. The outcomes of this qualitative research, in addition to information from other community consultations, resulted in the development of the multilingual DVD in Dinka, Karen, Burmese, Arabic, Juba Arabic and English.

The 20-minute DVD uses storytelling techniques to show the experiences of refugee "patients", following them on their journey from TB onset to diagnosis and through the range of treatments available from Chest Clinics.

'Breathing Space' focuses on key messages, including the importance of seeking early medical diagnosis, the confidentiality of screening processes and the free costs of TB treatment. This resource aims to increase knowledge and understanding of TB and subsequent health outcomes of newly arrived refugee communities.

The DVD also addresses a number of common myths and misconceptions about a disease that is totally curable if treated early.

The resource is designed for use with individuals, families and community groups for the purpose of TB education and disease prevention, as well as for newly diagnosed TB patients.

A free copy of the DVD will be distributed to appropriate health and settlement services.

The resource will be also available on the following websites:

- RHS (www.refugeehealth.org.au)
- NSW Multicultural Health Communication Services (www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au)
- Diversity Health Institute Clearing House (www.dhi.gov.au/clearinghouse).

To obtain a free copy please email NSW Refugee Health Service refugeehealth@sswahs.nsw.gov.au and include your mailing address.