

**CALL FOR ACTION TO SUPPORT  
QUALITY NURSING CARE  
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**17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of The Union -  
North American Region  
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VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA**

# Background

- Nursing session held during the 16<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the North American Region - The Union in San Antonio, Texas outlined some threats to quality nursing care:
- TB cases are increasingly more complex , complicated by co-morbidities (HIV/AIDS, diabetes, hepatitis, substance abuse).
- Pediatric TB is increasing and seen as a barometer for on-going transmission.

# Background, cont.

- TB diagnoses are being missed or delayed leading to increased transmission, complications, disability and death.
- Non-standardized approaches to care across geographic, managerial and organizational borders have made it very difficult to ensure quality nursing care.

# Threats to the nursing workforce

- Vacant public health nursing posts are being eliminated, frozen or filled with inadequately trained personnel who cannot manage the complexities of TB patients (DRTB, TB/HIV).
- Overburdened nurses are unable to provide quality care, resulting in poorer outcomes such as prolonged treatment, drug resistance, defaults and deaths.

# Threats, cont.

- Nursing care is being task shifted to less qualified health care workers and family members leading to a devaluation of skilled nursing care.
- Budget cuts in local and state health departments have led to a reduction or elimination of public health nursing positions.
- There is a shortage of faculty to teach public health nursing.

# Actions taken

- Presentations were made by representatives from the International Council of Nurses, Heartland National TB Center and Texas Infectious Disease Control on core nursing values, challenges in inpatient TB treatment, and treating TB along the US Mexico border.
- Break-out sessions followed the presentations to discuss the threats posed by the increasingly complicated cases of TB and to draft a “Call for Action” to support quality TB nursing care.

# Actions, cont.

- Break out sessions:
- 33 nurses separated into 4 focus groups (5 - 9 nurses per group)
- Each group had a moderator to facilitate the discussions, and a recorder/reporter
- Key highlights from the break-out sessions were presented in a follow-on plenary

# Questions for the break-out sessions

- What are the current threats to optimum patient care?
- What are some potential solutions to the threats?
- What is needed to implement The Best Practice Standards for quality TB Nursing Care?
- Are nurses adequately trained?

# Questions, cont.

- Are there a sufficient number of nurses to provide quality care?
- What organizations can be approached to support a “Call to Action” and what would you ask them to do?

# Highlighted answers from the break-out sessions

- Public health nurses are considered too costly and could be replaced by less well trained staff (nursing assistants, community workers, family members).
- Nursing institutions are moving away from teaching public health nursing and practicums are less available.
- The public health nursing workforce is aging and there are few among the younger cadre to replace them.

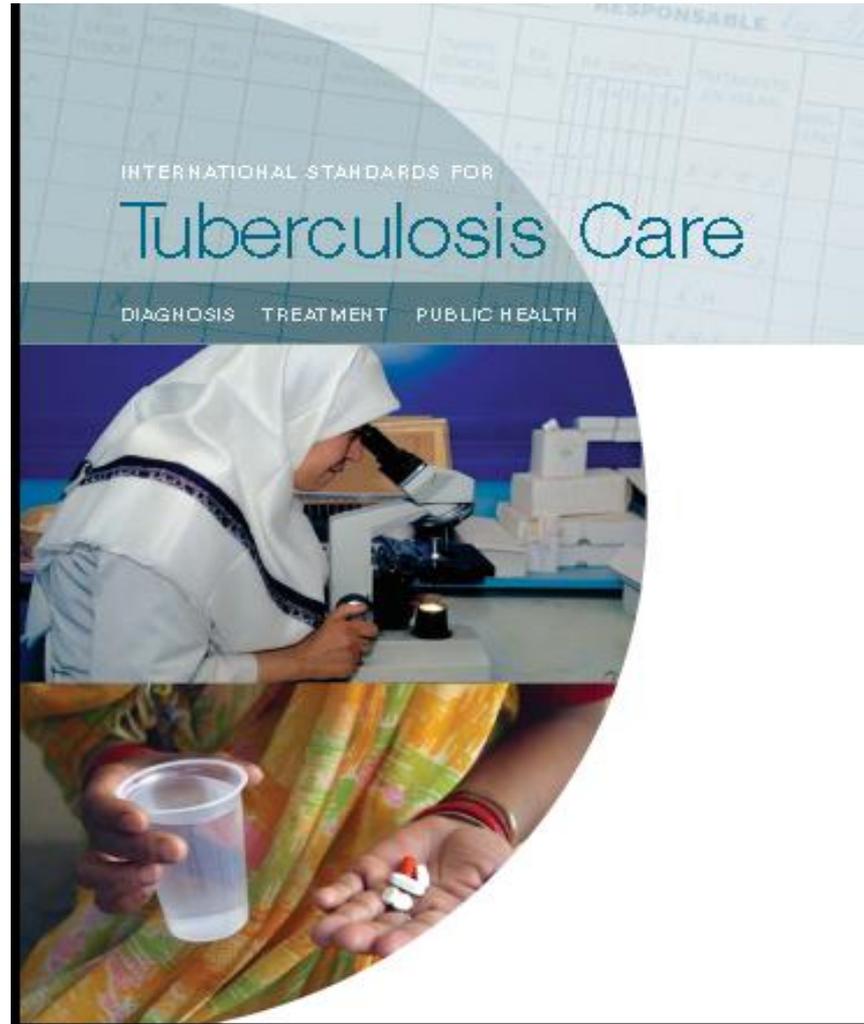
# More answers

- Ensure that nursing standards and core values are included in international and national policies and guidelines on standards of TB care.
- Advocate for quality nursing care by obtaining data on the impact of inadequate care on TB morbidity and mortality.

# Call for Action

- We, the undersigned, call for the Union to address nursing issues within their strategic plan for the next decade
- Operational research to quantify issues affecting the quality of nursing care as well as testing potential solutions e.g. media campaigns, investment in education, implementation of best practice standards
- Nurse training institutions and associations to promote best practice standards for TB nursing care and to recognize the importance of public health nursing
- The International Standards for TB Care to include a Nursing Charter with reference to detailed best practice standards for TB nursing care

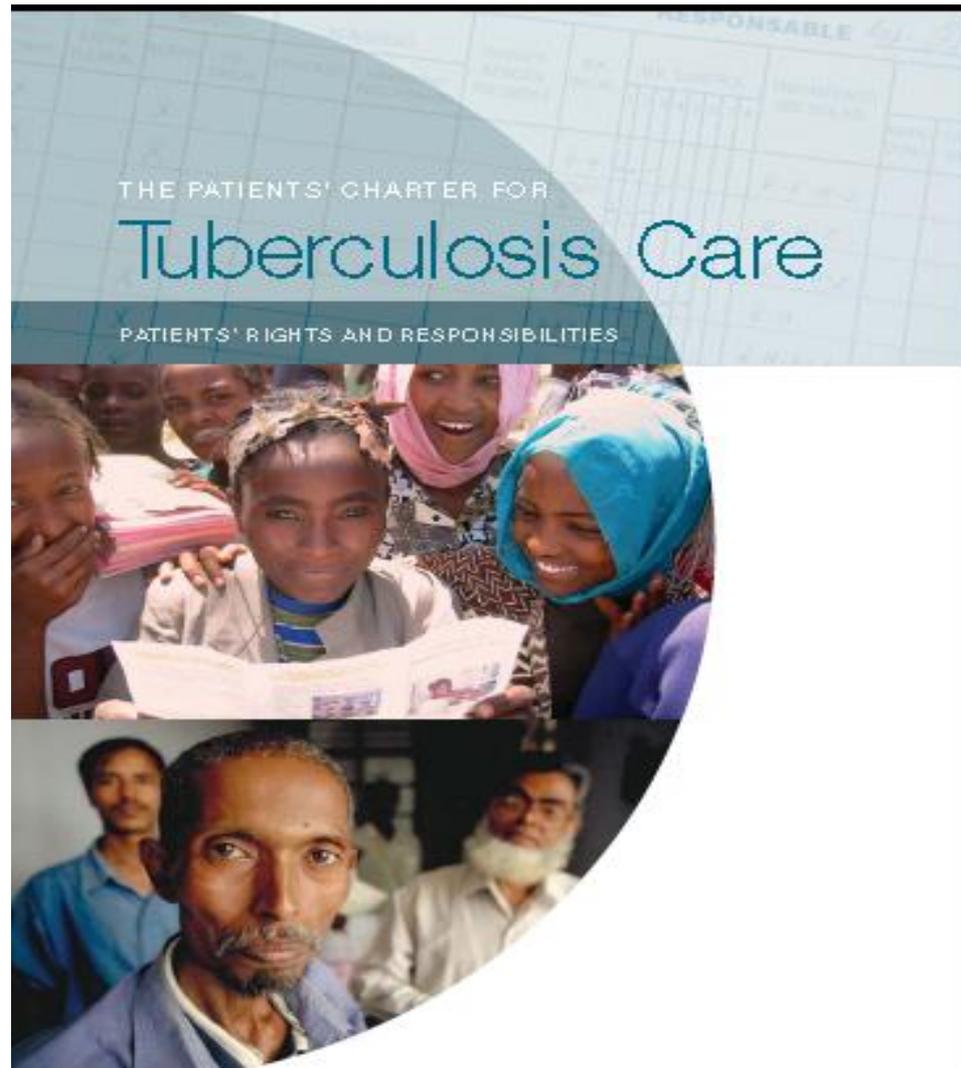
# ***International Standards for Tuberculosis Care (ISTC)***



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- The purpose of the *International Standards for Tuberculosis Care (ISTC)*, developed by the [Tuberculosis Coalition for Technical Assistance \(TBCTA\)](#), is to describe a widely accepted level of care that all practitioners, public and private, should seek to achieve in managing patients who have, or are suspected of having, tuberculosis.
- The *Standards* are intended to facilitate the effective engagement of all care providers in delivering high-quality care for patients of all ages, including those with sputum smear-positive, sputum smear-negative, and extra pulmonary tuberculosis, tuberculosis caused by drug-resistant *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex (*M.tuberculosis*) organisms, and tuberculosis combined with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection.

# ***The Patients' Charter for Tuberculosis Care (World Care Council)***



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*The Patients' Charter for Tuberculosis Care (The Charter)* outlines the rights and responsibilities of people with tuberculosis. It empowers people with the disease and their communities through this knowledge. Initiated and developed by patients from around the world, the *Charter* makes the relationship with health care providers a mutually beneficial one.

# *Best Practice for the Care of Patients with Tuberculosis: A Guide for Low-Income Countries (2007)*

## **BEST PRACTICE FOR THE CARE OF PATIENTS WITH TUBERCULOSIS**

A Guide for  
Low-Income Countries

2007

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## *Best Practice for the Care of Patients with Tuberculosis: A Guide for Low-Income Countries (2007)*

- Developed in partnership with nurses working in a wide variety of settings in high TB endemic, low-income countries.
- Based on existing good nursing practice as it relates to the provision of TB care which is presented as a series of standards that are adaptable to local services in low-income
- The standards are organized according to the movement of a patient from case-finding and holding through to completion of treatment and each standard corresponds to a significant point in the patient's care

# Call for Action

- The concept of a Nursing Charter as a companion piece to the ISTC is to acknowledge the nursing standards outlined in the *Best Practice Guide* as complementary to the ISTC in facilitating the engagement of all care providers in delivering high quality TB care as outlined in the Stop TB Strategy.
- Call for Action is to develop a Nursing Charter to include the nursing standards with reference back to the *Best Practice Guide* as the resource document to assist in implementation.

# Next steps

- All of the nurses from the session signed the Call to Action
- The Call for Action was sent to the Union for endorsement
- The Best Practice guide is being updated
- The ISTC is being revised, and we are in discussions with the review committee as to how to include a Nursing Charter

# What are your thoughts?

- Challenges and threats to quality nursing care?
- Potential solutions?
- Additions to the “Call for Action”
- Additional target audiences for the Call?
- Additional thoughts on how to improve the quality of TB nursing care and to raise the visibility of public health nursing?