



**National Tuberculosis
Coalition of America**



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Dear Fellow NTCA Members,

Let me begin by saying “Thank You.” Thank you for providing DOT for that patient before or after work. Thank you for giving that patient a ride to a clinic appointment. Thank you for ensuring that the individuals we serve have the necessities and support during a very trying time in their lives. In short, thank you for all that you do. Working in TB is a commitment like no other in public health. Other programs may simply provide one-time medications or vaccinations and never see the individual again. We see them anywhere from a couple of months to two (2) years or longer. We celebrate birthdays and holidays with them; we experience their joys and sorrows; we become an integral part of their daily lives.

It is undeniable that public health endured much scrutiny and criticism during the COVID-19 pandemic. As bad as it was, I was proud to hear of stories where TB staff across the country were looked to as subject matter experts on respiratory illness and precautions such as isolation. TB staff across the country stepped forward and shined during the pandemic while continuing to provide care and case management to individuals with TB and TB infection. I hope you are able to reflect on that time and feel a sense of pride in yourself and your colleagues in TB programs in every part of the country.

As I assume the role of President of the NTCA Board for 2024-2025, I am fortunate to serve as we celebrate our 30th anniversary. The organization was created in 1995 “to bring together the leaders of tuberculosis control programs in all states and territories, as well as many counties and city health departments that organize their own TB control activities.” I think it is important to keep NTCA’s vision, mission, and objectives ahead of us as we march forward to eliminate TB. This vision, mission and objectives can be found at <https://www.tbcontrollers.org/ntca-2/> and I encourage you to visit the website to learn more.

As we enter into our 30th year as an organization, I hope we, as an organization, are able to reflect on the great accomplishments of the last 30 years. Some of these accomplishments include the formation of our clinicians’, nurses’, and epidemiologists’ sections; development and revision of interjurisdictional notification forms; development and revisions of the “*Testing and Treatment of Latent Tuberculosis Infection in the United States: A Clinical Guide for Health Care Providers and Public Health Programs*,” a fact sheet and FAQs for the 4-month regimen to treatment pulmonary TB (isoniazid, rifapentine, moxifloxacin, and pyrazinamide); and most recently the extensive work to produce new isolation guidance. These are just a few and do not include the number of successful

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conferences, training and education, and advocacy efforts that have been made possible by dedicated and passionate leadership and members.

In spite of all of these accomplishments, we still have many difficult challenges ahead of us – continued drug shortages, increases in individuals with suspected or confirmed TB, medical and social barriers associated with those individuals we care for; drug-resistance, availability of up-to-date diagnostics and treatment, just to name a few. I am confident that we, as a community, will continue to meet these challenges head-on and work together to find alternative solutions to these challenges.

In closing, I know that things can seem overwhelming at times as we are being asked to do more with less resources and finding ourselves having to be inventive with the resources we have. When things seem overwhelming I challenge you to think back on your career and remember why you entered the field of public health; remember that feeling you have when someone completes treatment; remember that simple “thank you” or smile that someone that you have cared for gives you, remember the difference you have made, continue to make, and will make in the lives of others. I am reminded of a quote from author Lewis Carol, “One of the deep secrets of life is that all that is really worth doing is what we do for others.” During the past 30 years, we have lost several members that were integral to the success of NTCA. As President of NTCA, I hope to walk in their footsteps and build on the work that they have done while foraging new paths for new leaders of the organization to emerge. Keep doing what you are doing and be proud of the work that you do.

Sincerely,



Jason Cummins, MPH
President, NTCA