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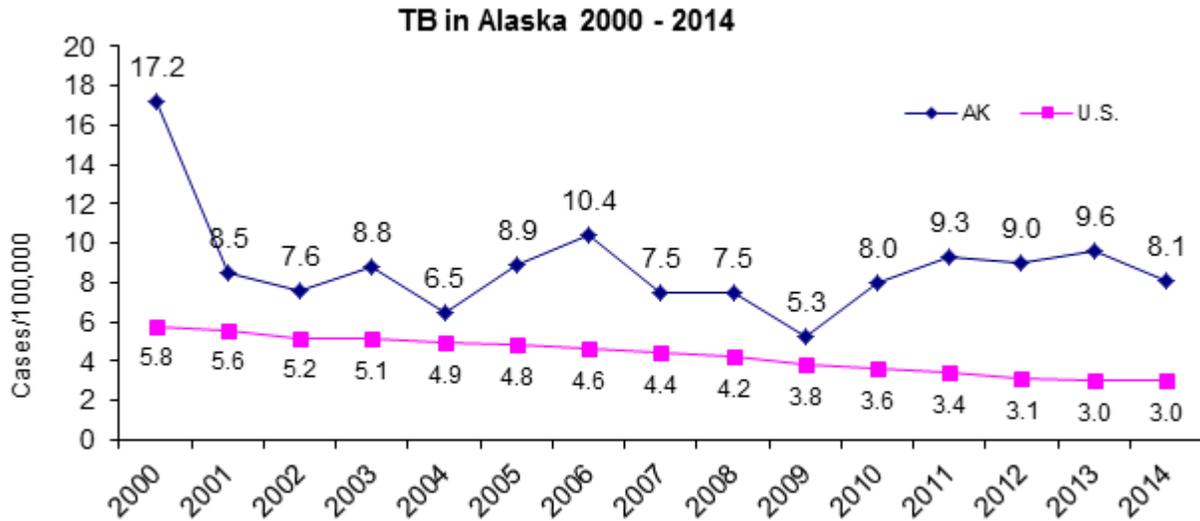
Alaska recognizes World TB Day 2015

“Find TB. Treat TB. Working together to eliminate TB”—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

ANCHORAGE — World TB Day is tomorrow, March 24. This year’s theme -“Find TB. Treat TB. Working together to eliminate TB” - is calling for a focus on collaboration to achieve the goal of TB elimination worldwide. In response, the Alaska Tuberculosis Control Program joins the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local public health agencies in recognizing World TB Day and worldwide efforts to eliminate TB.

In the mid-20th century, Alaska had among the highest rates of tuberculosis ever seen anywhere in the world. Through public health interventions, including early diagnosis and completion of effective treatment, rates of TB in Alaska have fallen more than 50-fold since 1950. Despite this progress, Alaska continues to have among the highest rates of TB in the United States each year, although 2014 saw a decrease of more than 15 percent from the 2013 rate.

“Alaska continues to make good progress, but there is still a lot of work to do,” Dr. Michael Cooper, in charge of Alaska’s TB control program, said. “World TB Day is a day to look back at the great work that has been accomplished, but also to consider what still needs to be done, and to recommit to the shared goal of TB control and prevention.”



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The Alaska TB Control Program provides leadership, policy development and technical assistance to local health departments, health care providers, public health nurses and other partners, who contribute to the control and prevention of TB in Alaska. The program works with Alaska communities to identify persons with TB infection and offer preventive therapy, identify all persons with TB disease and provide appropriate and complete treatment, and identify persons exposed to infectious TB disease and provide follow-up treatment as needed.

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately one-third of the global population is infected with TB. There continue to be more than 1 million deaths due to TB worldwide each year. “This is a preventable and curable disease, especially when diagnosed early,” Cooper said. Proper follow-up with providers and completion of treatment are critical to controlling the spread of TB.

For additional information about TB in Alaska, please visit the TB Control program website at epi.alaska.gov/id/tb.stm, or contact the program at 907-269-8000.

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