

The Reorganised WHO Task Force on Latent Tuberculosis Infection

The End TB strategy of WHO prioritizes the management of latent TB and TB prevention. To facilitate this, WHO established a task force on latent TB infection (LTBI) in 2015, which primarily focused on low TB burden settings. However, following the development of the 2018 harmonised and consolidated guidelines on the programmatic management of LTBI, the WHO has reorganised the LTBI task force to include representation from both high and low TB burden settings.

The specific terms of reference of the task force are to:

1. Analyse bottlenecks, identify innovative approaches and unblock barriers for implementation of latent TB management globally (includes strategies to catalyze the change in national policies).
2. Provide strategic advice to WHO on norms and tools to accelerate programmatic management of LTBI, including the monitoring and evaluation of its implementation in all settings and across all risk groups
3. Promote research on LTBI by identifying knowledge gaps, and define priorities in both fundamental and operational research.

Task Force Structure and Process

Membership: The task force members will be selected based on their individual capacity, skills and expertise in the management of LTBI. To ensure the task force represents global coverage of LTBI activities, members will be selected from both low burden and high burden TB countries. The task force members will be required to commit to conference calls, occasional face to face meetings (pending on funding availability), review documents and provide feedback. Membership in the task force will not be remunerated and each membership term will be three years with a possibility of extension only for one additional term.

Co-Chairs: The task force will have co-chairs selected among its members. The chair(s) will facilitate meetings and guide discussions. Additionally, s/he will be the spokesperson of the task force for issues related to LTBI, to advance the agenda and explore opportunities.

Secretariat: The Global TB Programme (GTB) of WHO will serve as the secretariat of the task force. The main activities will include ensuring efficient communication to members, setting meeting agenda, preparing and managing meetings reports, following progress of tasks, facilitating communication and collaboration with other WHO departments or units within GTB, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Sub-groups: Sub-groups of selected task force members may be established to further discussions of specific technical issues as deemed necessary. Based on specific needs and tasks, non-members may be invited to join such sub-groups.