

DOT Policy Statement

What is DOT?

Directly observed therapy, or DOT, is a process by which a health care worker observes a patient swallowing medications prescribed for the treatment of tuberculosis (TB).

DOT is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

“Programs utilizing DOT as the central element in a comprehensive, patient-centered approach to case management have higher rates of treatment completion than less intensive strategies.”

DOT helps you care for your TB patients:

One of the main reasons TB patients are not cured is non-adherence to their treatment regimen. We understand that, as a physician, you cannot ensure that your patients take their pills on a regular basis. The County of San Bernardino DOT program is available to help you ensure patient adherence.

DOT is good for patients:

Patients who take their medications are unlikely to develop drug resistance, become ill again or require re-hospitalization. DOT may help identify adverse medication reactions early, since a health worker is in the home on a regular basis.

DOT protects the public health:

DOT decreases the transmission of TB in our community by helping to render patients non-infectious as rapidly as possible. We can work together to help ensure that TB patients get the treatment they need and safeguard the public health.

The County of San Bernardino Tuberculosis Control Program offers DOT services to physicians in the community. Please call us at 800-722-4794 and ask to speak to your patient’s case manager if you would like your patient to be on DOT. The TB Control Program will routinely place patients on DOT who meet the following requirements:

- Have infectious pulmonary TB disease
- Have had prior treatment for active TB disease
- Are non-adherent to their TB regimen
- Are homeless or unstably housed
- Have cognitive impairment
- Have HIV/AIDS or other immune-compromising conditions
- Are a resident of a group facility
- Are on an intermittent TB dosing schedule
- Are a child or adolescent up to age 21
- Are on renal dialysis or frequently visit similar medically sensitive settings