

TO18 Patient Focus Groups

Good afternoon. My name is _____, and I am on the staff of _____. With me today is _____ of the TB Epi Studies Consortium, and _____ who is principal investigator of the larger study of which this focus group is part.

This study is concerned with approaches to latent tuberculosis infection, or LTBI – that is, when you have the TB germ in your body, but the germs are not making you sick or contagious to others. Our study is intended to find out how well new blood tests work for diagnosing LTBI in health care workers, as compared to the standard tuberculin skin test or PPD. It will look at what health care workers think of the tests and what the cost of the test is.

The tuberculin skin test (TST), or PPD, is one of the oldest diagnostic tests still used in medicine, but it is plagued with significant shortcomings. A new generation of tests for the evaluation of LTBI has been developed. These tests are able to detect differences between tuberculosis infection and infection with different bacteria from the same family.

The CDC recently issued guidelines for use of the only blood test that is currently available commercially in the United States. These guidelines stated that the QFT-G may be used in all situations in which skin testing is currently performed. However, the guidelines also pointed out several areas in which **additional data regarding the performance of the blood tests are needed, including how QFT-G functions in people who routinely undergo serial testing for LTBI, such as health care workers.**

The study of which this group is part responds to that research need.

Discussion Guidelines:

We would like the discussion to be informal, so there's no need to wait for us to call on you to respond. In fact, **we encourage you to respond directly to the comments other people make.** If you don't understand a question, please let us know. We are here to ask questions, listen, and make sure everyone has a chance to share.

We are not so much concerned with pinning down facts today; rather, our goal is to fully understand your experience and opinion.

Please share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. We are just as interested in the diversity of your experiences and opinions as we are in what consensus there may be in your viewpoints.

We do ask that we all keep each **other's identities, participation, and remarks private.** We hope you'll feel free to speak openly and honestly.

As it says in the consent form, we will tape record the discussion, because we don't want to miss any of your comments. Only the study researchers will have access to these tapes and they will be destroyed after they have been transcribed. The tapes will be analyzed at Columbia University in New York.

I will be asking most of the questions today. Kirsten Wall will be taking notes, and **may also ask some clarifying and follow up questions.**

Just so we are all on the same page I want to briefly describe the 2 different types of diagnostic tests for TB. For the TST (or PPD), a person receives a small pinch from a needle to inject a few drops of tuberculin or PPD intradermally (just beneath the surface of your skin). The person will return to the clinic in 48 to 72 hours to have the results of the test read.

For the QFT-G blood test, a person will have a vial of blood drawn and the specimen will be sent to the lab. The person will receive the results from their health care provider after the specimen is analyzed.

Let's begin. Let's find out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. **Tell us your first name and your professional position.**

Rapport building stage (approx 20 minutes)

- 1) Have you had a TST or PPD?
 - a) *What has your experience with the skin test been so far? What do you like about the skin test? What don't you like about the skin test*
 - b) *Did you have any bad reactions to the skin test?*
 - c)
- 2) Have you had a QFT-G blood test?
 - a) *What has your experience with the blood test been so far? What do you like about the blood test? What don't you like about the blood test*
 - b) *What did you hear about the blood test for TB testing before you were tested?*
 - c) *Did you have any bad reactions to the blood test?*

In-depth discussion (approx 60-90 minutes)

- 3) In your opinion, what would the test you prefer for LTBI be like, the skin test or a blood test?
 - a) *What are the important factors that helped you choose one over the other?*
 - b) How much is your opinion of the QFT blood test influenced by:
 - The believability of the results of the test*
 - How long it takes to get the results*
 - Which test your doctor recommends*
 - How much the test costs*
 - Any side effects you may have from the test*
 - Whether the test is covered by insurance*
 - The amount of time the test has been in use*
 - Effect of the test on your ability to do your work*
 - Your ability to understand the test*
 - Pain from the test*
 - Convenience of the test*
 - The ability to tell if you have been infected with the TB germ even if you were vaccinated against TB*

- 4) Which test, the TST or QFT, do you have more confidence in?
- 5) How satisfied are you with the information that you received about the blood test?
1. *Would you like to have received more information about the blood test?*
 2. *What do you wish your health care provider told you about the blood test?*
 3. *Would you like to have access to other resources related to the blood test? What are they?*
 4. *What do you think is the best way to provide information about the blood test (one-on-one provider interaction, brochure, video, other)?*

Closure (approx 10 minutes)

General summary of impressions or conclusions from the discussion by facilitator

Final opportunity for participants to clarify and confirm information

Q&A of participants' questions

Thank participants and indicate next steps