

CDC Issues Draft Of Updated TB Guidelines for Public Comment (December 2004)

CDC has published a notice for public comment on its “Draft Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in Health-care Settings” in the December 6, 2004 Federal Register. It is anticipated that new final TB Guidelines will be issued sometime in 2005, as an update to the 1994 TB guidelines.

The Environmental Controls Section of the new Guidelines (Section J) essentially reaffirms the recommendations for the use of ventilation, negative pressure, HEPA filtration, and UVGI systems in the 2005 Infection Control Guidelines.

There is, however, one addition of note in Paragraph J.2.11, on page 107, which states:

“Health-care settings serving populations with a high prevalence of TB disease may need to improve the existing general ventilation system or use air-cleaning technologies in general-use areas such as waiting rooms, emergency medical service areas, and radiological suites. Applicable approaches include: a) single-pass non-recirculating systems that exhaust air to the outside, b) recirculation systems that pass air through HEPA filters before recirculating it into the general ventilation system, and c) room-air recirculation units with HEPA filters and UV systems.”

HEPA-CARE® HEPA filtration systems and germicidal UV modules are perfectly suited for all of these applications, in addition to use in airborne infectious isolation (AII) rooms. Hospitals and other facilities may want to consider implementing similar techniques to help protect against the spread of other infectious illnesses.