



**COUNTY OF ORANGE  
HEALTH CARE AGENCY**

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES  
PULMONARY DISEASE SERVICES**

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Dear Health Care Provider,

This letter is to inform you of a current nationwide shortage of isoniazid (INH), a cornerstone drug for treating tuberculosis disease (TB) and latent *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection (LTBI). The production of INH in the United States has been interrupted and stocks of the medication are dwindling. The initial forecast date for restoring INH production has been extended from late January 2013 to as late as March 2013; however, these forecasts are unstable and vary by pharmaceutical company. In response to the INH shortage, the County of Orange Health Care Agency TB Control Program is rationing its supply of the medication by limiting treatment to the following individuals: 1) patients with TB disease; 2) household contacts to contagious pulmonary TB cases; and 3) patients with LTBI who have the greatest risk for progression to active TB disease (e.g., those with HIV infection and children < 5 years old). Patients eligible for treatment of LTBI in our clinics who are not in these categories will be placed on a waiting list for LTBI treatment when the INH supply is restored.

If you have patients with LTBI and are unable to obtain INH for these individuals, you will have to defer treatment until the INH supply is restored. Treatment for LTBI can be postponed when the likelihood or hazard of TB disease is low, but you should develop a system for recalling patients to initiate treatment when INH becomes available.

Please do not hesitate to call me at (714) 834-8243 if you have any questions or concerns about this matter.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julie Low, MD  
TB Controller, County of Orange