



International Union Against
Tuberculosis and Lung Disease
Health solutions for the poor

For Immediate Release

The Union welcomes WHO recommendations for treatment of drug-resistant tuberculosis

Friday 13 December 2019 (Paris, France) – The Union welcomes the rapid communication from the World Health Organization (WHO) on the treatment of drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB).

The WHO rapid communication document, issued on 11 December, is based on new evidence shared by the South African TB Programme, as well as research and technical partners including The Union. It recommends improving access to new regimens and prioritising an effective all-oral short treatment regimen, replacing the injectable drugs with bedaquiline for people with multidrug and rifampicin-resistant TB. It also highlights the need for increased data and operational research to support these recommendations.

Dr Grania Brigden, The Union's Director of the Department of TB, said: "The Union supports the move towards shorter all oral treatment regimens with better outcomes, lower toxicity and reduced side effects for people with drug-resistant TB.

"The WHO's recommendations build on the success of the nine-month regimen that The Union has been involved in through the STREAM trials, and the operational data that helped contribute to these new guidelines. As new all-oral regimens are developed, there is a clear need for more and better evidence to support their implementation around the world.

"The Union will continue to support the generation of high-quality data for all oral regimens through operational research and clinical trials, such as STREAM stage 2. This will provide solid evidence on efficacy and tolerance of shorter all oral regimens containing bedaquiline, as well as data on the acquisition of resistance to core drugs for all oral regimens such as bedaquiline.

"The WHO rapid communication emphasises the importance of operational research in generating high quality programmatic data. The Union calls on countries and funders, including The Global Fund, to prioritise operational research to guide future treatment guidelines, as well as complement the data expected from clinical trials currently underway."

Further Information:

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About the [International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease](https://www.theunion.org/) (The Union)

The Union was founded in 1920 and is the world's first global health organisation. We are a global leader in ending TB, we fight the tobacco industry, and we solve key problems in treating major diseases. We use science to design the best treatments and policies for the

most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world. The Union's members, staff and consultants operate in more than 140 countries and embody our core values of accountability, independence, quality and solidarity.

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