



City and County of San Francisco

Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **San Francisco's New TB Cases Drop Below 100 in 2010**

#### **World TB Day to Honor 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Francis J. Curry, TB Pioneer**

**San Francisco, CA**—If Francis J. Curry, MD, San Francisco's own TB pioneer, were alive to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year, he would love his centennial birthday gift: 98 cases of new TB—the smallest annual number ever recorded in the City's history. A surprising gift, one even Dr. Curry would not have believed possible. Yet it was his forward thinking and philosophy that has guided San Francisco's TB Control Program in achieving this new milestone.

To celebrate this achievement and in observance of **World TB Day** and Dr. Curry's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Department of Public Health, along with two organizations that honor his work and philosophy, the Francis J. Curry National Tuberculosis Center and the Curry Senior Center, will host a **press conference on Thursday, March 24, 10:30 at Curry Senior Center, 315 Turk St.** Speakers will address, among other issues, the current rates and status of TB, new strategies, breakthrough diagnostics, how San Francisco has arrived at the historic low of 98 new TB cases, the recently published *International Standards of Tuberculosis Care*, and the regional and global impact of the disease. The event also recognizes the contributions of Dr. Francis J. Curry by renaming the center bearing his name as the Curry *International* Tuberculosis Center.

Some of the innovations Dr. Curry implemented as Director of TB Control in the 1960s were considered controversial and overreaching at the time. For example, Dr. Curry focused on providing "patient-centered care," in which clinic locations and operating hours were geared to the convenience of the patient, rather than the staff. Additionally, Dr. Curry conducted a study, reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, which documented the effect of a single anti-tuberculosis drug in preventing the disease in San Francisco school children. These, as well as many other innovations pioneered by Dr. Curry, became models for national and international efforts to control the disease that still kills nearly two million people a year around the world.

Dr. Curry died in 1996, but his legacy was recognized by naming one of three national TB centers for education and training after him, in 1993. In recent years, the Curry Center has

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**The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans.**

We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~  
~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally-proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

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expanded its operations worldwide to include education, consultation, and research, with particular focus on countries having a high burden of TB. The Center collaborates with the World Health Organization, the United State Agenda for International Development (USAID,) and many TB control programs around the world.

Even with the historic low in new TB cases, the task in San Francisco is not finished. Achieving fewer than 100 new cases has required, and will continue to require, intensive efforts to find and prevent cases. Prevention is an increasingly important activity, and the TB Control Program is targeting the large reservoir of preventable TB cases in the City. A new campaign will reach deeper into communities of greatest need. In addition, new information has identified additional risk factors for the disease. “Almost half of all TB cases diagnosed in the City in 2009 have links to tobacco use and diabetes. This connection gives us a new focus for prevention,” says Dr. Masae Kawamura, Director of San Francisco’s TB Control Program.

The site of World TB Day’s press conference, Curry Senior Center, provides service to a community that continues to have TB rates commensurate with the developing world. Participants at the press conference will be representing Breathe California, the Curry Senior Center, Curry International TB Center, RESULTS San Francisco and the San Francisco TB Control Program.

**TB patients will be available for interviews in English, Spanish and Chinese.**

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