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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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World TB Day, 2017
Unite to End TB

World TB Day is a time to recognize achievements in tuberculosis (TB) prevention and control, and renew our commitment to ending this devastating disease in our community. Each year Santa Barbara County acknowledges March 24th, World TB Day as a means to raise awareness about TB disease and how it can be prevented. On March 21, 2017, Supervisor Steve Lavagnino will present a proclamation in honor of this important date at the Board of Supervisors meeting.

Although TB is preventable and curable, too many people still suffer from this disease resulting in widespread negative health, social and economic impacts. TB Prevention is a priority for the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department. The Department has set forth a strategic plan toward eliminating or reducing the incidences of TB by promoting and educating medical and general communities about targeted testing and treatment of latent TB infection with short-term treatment regimens.

Expanding targeted testing and treatment of latent TB infection is vital to eliminating TB disease. Up to 13 million people in the U.S. are estimated to have latent tuberculosis (TB) infection. Latent TB infection is a condition in which a person is infected with the TB bacteria, but does not currently have active TB disease and cannot spread TB to others. However, if these bacteria become active and multiply, latent TB infection can turn into TB disease. Without treatment, on average 5-10% of people with latent TB infection will develop TB disease. For some people, that risk is much higher. CDC and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommend testing populations that are at increased risk for TB infection.

TB prevention is a partnership with clinicians, health care agencies, and community organizations, especially those serving at-risk populations, having a critical role in TB elimination. Together we can end TB.

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