January 3, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrators of Licensed Facilities and Activities

FROM: Gwen C. Thompson, Bureau Chief
Bureau of Health Facilities Licensing

SUBJECT: Tuberculosis screening

In Department regulations requiring tuberculosis screening for designated individuals, tuberculosis infection is diagnosed by as positive purified protein derivative (PPD) based tuberculosis skin test (TST) result.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published Guidelines for Preventing the Transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in Health-Care Settings, 2005 (https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5417a1.htm). The Department has reviewed the CDC tuberculosis guidelines and, although a majority of tuberculosis control topics remain unchanged, there is an update relating to the PPD-based TST that impacts current regulations requiring the use of a tuberculosis skin test. The guidelines provide for other methods for testing individuals for tuberculosis infection.

Specially, the CDC has approved the whole-blood interferon gamma release assay (IGRA), QuantiFERON®-TB Gold test (QFT_G) (CELLESTIS Limited, Carnegie, Victoria, Australia), which is a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved in vitro cytokine-based assay for cell-mediated immune reactivity to Mycobacterium tuberculosis (M. tuberculosis), as a substitute for the tuberculosis skin test in tuberculosis screening programs. This IGRA is an example of a Blood Assay for M. tuberculosis (BAMT).

Therefore, in the interest of establishing reasonable standards that can be met by providers yet do not compromise the health and well-being of the individuals of these facilities and activities, it has been determined that an alternative standard will be considered as acceptable.

All licensed facilities and activities will be required to meet the standards outlined in the regulations regarding tuberculosis skin testing for individuals; or, as an alternative, where licensed facilities and activities are required to use a single-step or two-step tuberculosis skin test (TST), a single Blood Assay for M. tuberculosis (BAMT) may be

substituted for the TST in the manner designated by CDC guidelines. Facilities/Services must comply with all other elements of the licensing regulations related to tuberculosis skin testing for individuals. This exception relates solely to South Carolina licensing standards. Any adverse condition(s) that may be related to this exception may result in revocation of the exception by the Department.

If there are any questions regarding the memorandum, please contact the Bureau of Health Facilities Licensing at (803) 545-4370. For specific questions concerning CDC tuberculosis guidelines or the Blood Assay for M. tuberculosis (BAMT), please call the Department's Division of TB Control at (803) 898-0558.

GCT/dnf