FORCED AIR HEATING IN HEALTH FACILITIES AS A STRATEGY TO REDUCE NOSOCOMIAL TB TRANSMISSION IN RESOURCE-LIMITED SETTINGS.

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**Issues:** Health facilities are known to be "hot spots" for tuberculosis(TB) transmission and prevention of nosocomial TB transmission is now of major operational significance particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa given high annual TB case rates, and the growing incidence of MDR and XDR-TB.

**Description:** Environmental control measures such as UVI irradiation and filtration are technologies not well adapted to be used due to the difficult access to resources for installation and maintenance. In such settings, other methods such as natural ventilation have been proven more efficient in TB infection control. Nevertheless, they often require major investment, or changes to the existing infrastructure which is often too expensive and time consuming.

**Lessons learned:** Forced air heating is a known strategy already used in some settings to induce convective air currents or directional air-flow. This strategy could be adapted for preventing nosocomial TB transmission by inducing directional "air-flow currents" or enhancing insufficient natural ventilation within pre-existing health facilities without making major infrastructural modifications.

**Recommendations:** There is an urgent need to assess the feasibility of this technique in existing health facilities. The strategy would be assessed in primary health facilities in Khayelitsha South Africa and reported at the conference.

**Key words:** TB, nosocomial transmission, MDR, XDR