Good Morning. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Bureau of TB Control’s Annual TB Conference. Each year the Bureau of TB Control organizes a TB conference as a way to address some of the ongoing challenges in TB Control and Prevention in New York City and to keep New York City providers abreast of current TB-related topics.

This year’s conference is being held in commemoration of World TB Day. World TB Day, held annually on March 24th, commemorates the date in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch presented his discovery of the TB bacillus to a group of doctors in Berlin.

The 2007 World TB Day Theme is “TB Anywhere is TB Everywhere” and it conveys a message of urgency and shared responsibility towards the fight against TB. This year’s theme contains supporting messages that focus on the importance of increased investment, stronger community involvement, strengthened research and development, and action against the threat of extensively drug-resistant TB and HIV-related TB.

In connection with the World TB Day theme, this year’s conference will focus on the changing epidemiology of TB in NYC and its effect on TB control efforts, the challenges of responding to the threat of highly drug resistant globally and locally and as a follow-up to last year’s conference topic “Improving the Diagnosis of TB”, this year's conference will update providers on the Health Department’s experience with the implementation of the QuantiFERON TB-Gold Test. I know many providers are eager to learn more about the use and availability of this new blood-based test for TB.

The afternoon sessions will focus on recent TB outbreaks in certain high-risk settings, the patterns of ongoing TB transmission as identified through molecular epidemiology and CDC’s updated infection control strategies used to prevent TB transmission in health-care settings.

Given the complexity of managing diverse TB patients in New York City, the conference will also address cultural competence in TB care and the cultural factors that impact the management of TB among specific ethnic groups. You’ll also hear the compelling true story of a former TB patient and how TB changed her life.

I hope you will find this year’s conference an interesting and rewarding experience.