

## **Orange County Tuberculosis (TB) Cases Down in 2006**

(**Santa Ana**) – A total of 226 Tuberculosis (TB) cases were reported in Orange County during 2006, a decrease of 6.6% from the total of 242 cases reported in 2005.

“In the past 10 years, the TB case rate in Orange County has decreased from 12.2 cases per 100,000 population in 1997 to 7.3 cases per 100,000 population last year,” said Dr. Eric Handler, Orange County Health Officer. “However, TB remains a significant public health concern, because thousands of Orange County residents have latent TB infection, meaning they carry the germ in their body and are not currently sick with TB, but could become sick later unless they receive treatment.”

Orange County’s 2006 rate of 7.3 TB cases per 100,000 population compares to the statewide rate of 7.4 per 100,000 population and a nationwide rate of 4.6 cases per 100,000 population. Orange County had the fourth largest number of cases reported in California during 2006, behind Los Angeles, San Diego and Santa Clara Counties.

March 24<sup>th</sup> is recognized as World TB Day. This year’s theme, *TB Anywhere is TB Everywhere*, recognizes that although TB is preventable and curable, it remains a global public health emergency, with 1.6 million deaths worldwide attributed to TB in 2005. In Orange County, the Health Care Agency’s Public Health Services investigates reports of TB cases and provides treatment and control services to prevent the further spread of TB in the community.