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PRESS RELEASE

MoHW and MOE Inform of Confirmed Tuberculosis Cases

Belmopan, February 18, 2026.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness (MoHW), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE), informs the public of a confirmed case of tuberculosis (TB) in a 16-year-old female student. The diagnosis was confirmed clinically and through laboratory testing on February 12, 2026. The student attends Edward P. Yorke High School in Belize City.

The patient has been promptly initiated on appropriate anti-tuberculosis treatment and is responding well to therapy.

In addition, a household family member, a 10-year-old student at Ephesus Primary School, presented with non-specific symptoms and was evaluated at the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital Authority (KHMHA). Based on the clinical assessment, the child was diagnosed with tuberculosis and has also been started on treatment.

Since confirmation of these cases, the MoHW has notified the respective schools and has initiated standard public health protocols. Contact tracing is currently underway to identify and assess individuals who may have been in close contact with the cases. Appropriate screening and follow-up measures are being conducted in accordance with national TB guidelines.

Tuberculosis is a bacterial infection that primarily affects the lungs and can be transmitted through the air when a person with active pulmonary TB coughs, speaks, or sneezes. Transmission usually occurs after prolonged, close contact with an infectious individual.

Common symptoms of tuberculosis include:

- Persistent cough lasting more than two weeks
- Weight loss
- Night sweats
- Fever
- Fatigue and weakness

The public is reminded that other respiratory viral illnesses currently circulating in the country may also cause symptoms such as cough and fever. Individuals experiencing persistent or concerning symptoms are encouraged to seek medical evaluation at their nearest health facility for appropriate assessment and testing.

The MoHW provides free screening, diagnostic services, and treatment for tuberculosis at all public health facilities nationwide.

The public is also reminded to practice good respiratory hygiene, including:

- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Washing hands frequently
- Staying home when ill
- Avoiding close contact with elderly or immunocompromised individuals if experiencing symptoms

The Ministries continue to monitor the situation closely and remain committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students and the wider communities.

For more information, the public is encouraged to contact their nearest healthcare provider or call the Ministry of Health and Wellness toll-free number: 0-800-MOH-CARE (0-800-664-2273).

Ends