

Community volunteers as messengers of Tuberculosis control: A study from Faridkot, India



Title: Community volunteers as messengers of Tuberculosis control: A study from Faridkot, India

Category: Public health practice

Topic: G00 Civil Society

Sub-topic: G02 Community outreach

Content: Background: Tuberculosis a global public health issue characterized with limited access to health services is one of the bigger challenges faced by India where the incidence is around one-fifth of the global cases reported. In view of this, the need for community participation is a pivotal measure in combating the global burden of tuberculosis. Project Axshya, a civil society initiative for TB care and control recognizes the importance of community participation through the involvement of community volunteers. Volunteers are the first point of contact and are identified and trained from within the community.

Intervention: The community volunteers were identified within the communities and trained in aspects such as identification of TB symptomatic, sputum collection and transportation, referral, intensive outreach activities and also on engaging them as community DOTS providers from Faridkot district of Punjab.

Results: Around 30% of TB symptomatics registered at the District Microscopy Centre (DMC) were identified by the community volunteers for the year 2013-14. Of which, 74% have been identified through sputum collection and transportation (SCT) while 26% through referrals. Out of the TB symptomatics tested for TB 10% were found positive. The community volunteers ensured that all those who were tested positive, were put on DOTS treatment.

Conclusion: Community volunteers are able to reach to marginalized and vulnerable areas of the district. Engaging these volunteers is an essential link in service delivery. Through this process a community system strengthening is being established for TB care and control.

Submitted: Public health practice

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