

Health seeking behavior of the miners: A case from Pakhar mines, Lohardarga district, Jharkhand



Title: Health seeking behavior of the miners: A case from Pakhar mines, Lohardarga district, Jharkhand

Category: Public health practice

Topic: D00 Adult & Child Lung Health

Sub-topic: D05 Community participation in lung health

Content: Background: Jharkhand is one of India's poorest states, with more than 40% of the population in poverty. Mining is major economic generation activity of the people. Livelihood of these miners easily succumbs to diseases like tuberculosis (TB) and other lung diseases pertaining to the occupation. . As per the Mines Act 1952, more focus has been given to the accidents in the mines and the diseases are kept as a secondary issue. This study documents the health seeking behavior of miners in areas of "Pakhar mines", particularly to those associated with Tuberculosis symptoms.

Method: Structured questionnaire interview was conducted in March 2014 among 200 workers in two mines of Lohardarga on their health seeking behavior.

Result: Out of 200 workers interviewed, 89% stated difficulties in visiting the PHC of which 61% stated long distance as a barrier in visiting. Among other difficulties, 18% informed timing of OPD hours as a difficulty while 12% stated that the PHC staffs asked for repeated visits. It was also observed that 11% preferred to get medicines from the private facilities including the less-than-fully-qualified professionals.

Conclusion and recommendations: With increasing mechanization, mining equipment has grown larger and more powerful resulting in increase in the number of laborers and poor health of the miners. Distance of the health care facilities from the working area makes it difficult for the miners to get adequate medical treatment and health becomes a secondary factor. Establishment of clinics and DMCs near the working areas is recommended.

Submitted: Public health practice

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