

Lung health of coal mining workers and their health seeking behavior in Dakra, Ranchi district, India



Title: Lung health of coal mining workers and their health seeking behavior in Dakra, Ranchi district, India

Category: Public health practice

Topic: D00 Adult & Child Lung Health

Sub-topic: D05 Community participation in lung health

Content: Background: Due to the exposure to the coal mine dust, coal miners and the inhabitants of the vicinity of these areas are often subjected to a number of lung diseases and disorders. The growth of open-cast coal mining operations in Jharkhand's Northern Karanpura Valley poses a foremost threat to the region's population and local environment. Purnadih mine project, which is running for 30 years, is owned by Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), a subsidiary of the state-owned company Coal India Limited (CIL). The families of 200 villages located in the vicinity of mining areas are also affected. This paper analyses the issues and the health seeking behavior of the population residing nearby opencast mines area of Dakra, Jharkhand.

Method: Awareness about TB and lung diseases, health seeking behavior and issues faced by the community were captured through one-to-one interview guided by a structured questionnaire. Using simple random technique, about 100 coal mine workers and families residing nearby open cast mining of Purunadih, Dakra coal field were interviewed.

Results: From 100 workers interviewed, 50% were unaware of the safety measures of underground mining as well as occupational hazard involved with mining. More than 50% of them were illiterate and 18% of them suffered from Bronchial Asthma. 5 % of families in close radius who had lived for 20 years had suffered from pneumoconiosis. At the time of illness most of them (>50%) depend on local private providers and other travel long distance to avail basic facilities. With little knowledge about illness, 80% of them preferred over-the-counter drugs instead of travelling.

Conclusion: Coal mining is predominant economic generation activity of the region. Workers in these areas, lack awareness about safety measures, poor healthcare facilities etc. Community engagement activities among these workers were conducted and informed about TB. District TB forum members were sensitized about the issue and are in constant consultation with policy makers for ensuring safety of miners.

Submitted: Public health practice

Status: Not Yet Decided

Keywords: Occupational lung health, mining, coal workers

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