THALI supports Active Case Finding campaign in Telangana

The THALI team in Telangana supported the RNTCP in making house-to-house visits for case finding and RNTCP staff were encouraged to proactively engage in the care of TB patients. The THALI team in Telangana supported the RNTCP in making house-to-house visits for case finding and RNTCP staff were encouraged to proactively engage in the care of TB patients.

Meeting on M&E tools with RNTCP

A meeting with M&E field staff was held in Bengaluru to discuss monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools and the state’s feedback. The patient care support (PCS) tool and a risk and needs assessment (RANA) form were modiﬁed to incorporate their inputs. The RNTCP acknowledged the usefulness of the tools in planning and support.

M&E plan for expanded geographical districts

An M&E meeting in Telangana had a ﬁnal review of the M&E tools and discussed the course of action for rolling out the M&E activities in existing and new geographic areas, according to the new work plan. The data ﬂow and documentation processes were discussed. The targets for each zone in three districts in Telangana were discussed and shared with the state M&E team for further planning and target allocation.

Communications material development workshop

The team also conducted a joint workshop to develop a plan to align the outreach and communication strategies of the project with the new focus on patient-centric treatment, care and support. Over three days, the THALI, RNTCP and THALI-RNTCP deliberated and developed guiding communication strategies for microplanning and outreach, monitoring and evaluation, and communications. The new strategies align with the existing RNTCP structures for implementation and promote collaboration on the ﬁeld.

Following this workshop, an EIC material development workshop was held to work on developing materials to be used by outreach workers (ORWs), RNTCP staff and patients. Using a set of existing resource (RANA) forms and tools, the RNTCP staff and ORWs, along with representatives from the RNTCP, worked with artists to develop new case studies and maps to promote patient-centric treatment, care and support through patient advocacy, including an IEC material development workshop.

The workshop was supported by the National Health Mission (NHM) of the Government of India, World Bank and USAID, and provided technical assistance to develop the new strategies in collaboration with the THALI and RNTCP teams.

Trainings on management of drug-resistant TB

The THALI team conducted trainings of trainers with 27 healthcare workers from Telangana in May for the programmatic management of drug-resistant TB (PMDT), under the capacity-building initiative supported by Johnson & Johnson.

Sensitization of Key Opinion Leaders

The THALI team held a meeting of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) from project sites in Telangana in order to sensitize them on the project and discuss how they could support ORWs’ efforts in the community. The gathering of 17 KOLs included local leaders from political parties, members of women’s self-help groups and community-based organizations. The sensitization session was followed by a lively debate on what the KOLs could do to ensure treatment adherence in their areas. The KOLs raised concerns about patient support and the need for interventions to foster awareness and peer support groups in their areas of intervention.

The THALI team in Hyderabad worked with KOLs, the RNTCP team and TB patients and their families to promote patient-centric care. The KOLs pledged to support CCs by undertaking visits to difﬁcult cases to ensure treatment adherence and ensure that patients get nutritious food.

Risk and Needs Assessment form piloted by outreach workers

The THALI outreach workers (ORWs) in Bangalore and Hyderabad piloted the Risk and Needs Assessment (RANA) form developed by the M & E team among patients receiving in-patient care through the project. The proforma intents to assess risks to treatment adherence, including a poor knowledge of TB, alcoholism and tobacco use, lack of a family support, ﬁnancial diﬃculties, problems with treatment, as well as if patients have access to social entitlements and welfare schemes. This will help ORWs tailor their strategies for patient care and support.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) system

The THALI team conducted a workshop on microplanning for RNTCP, including M&E teams, TB officers (TUs), project staff, TB researchers and state-level TB coordinators (STCs) and TB Health Visitors (TBHVs) in 25 slums, covering 29,100 households in Hyderabad and 3,380 in Ranga Reddy. A total of over 10,000 TB cases were screened, out of which 191 presumptive TB cases were referred to the nearest Designated Microscopy Centre (DMCs), Of which 131 were tested, yielding 12 positive cases of TB.

The THALI team in Bengaluru worked with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), the RNTCP team and TB patients and their families to establish support groups to provide ongoing support to patients during treatment. Twelve support group sessions were held in May and June, with about 80 patients and 32 family members. The participants discussed barriers to treatment adherence, side eﬀects, role oﬀerings, self-medications, lack of trust in hospitals, treatment stigma and feelings of isolation. Families and peers were also supported in accessing care and in the care of TB patients.

28 TB Champions were identiﬁed to play an active role in sharing the messages that TB care can cure and the importance of open, honest dialogue. The Champions were encouraged to proactively engage with TB patients and families to ensure care and support.

Followings the RANA exercise in Bangalore, THALI Community Coordinators (CCs) met with Telangana TB patients to open bank accounts to link them up with government-mandated direct beneﬁt transfer (DBT) schemes. Only if we work together will things be good.

We can do something together, for people and for our future campaign goals as well and am happy to hear that they will be extending their support to the newly-identified districts.

Only if we work together will things be good. - A Key Opinion Leader, Bangalore

KHTP awarded JEET Project in Karnataka

KHTP’s existing THALI and J&J projects on tuberculosis (TB) in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The THALI project is expanding its footprint in Karnataka, Telangana and other geographical districts in the state. The THALI project is expanding its operations to existing high-burden districts in Telangana and districts in Telangana and three in Andhra Pradesh. The focus of the intervention will be in high-burden pockets, and will be scaled up in another four districts that are in need of care and support through the project. The THALI project is expanding its footprint in Karnataka, Telangana and other geographical districts in the state.

Moreover, the Department of Health and Family Welfare and other state-level TB coordinators (STCs) in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana also supported the project. The project will have wrap-around support from the TB campaign.

Voices from the field

The microplanning session helped us identify gaps in communication that might prevent TB patients from accessing RNTCP field staff.

If there are patients in my area who are not taking medicines, I will go and talk to them. I can do something together, for people and for our future campaign goals as well and am happy to hear that they will be extending their support to the newly-identified districts.