THALI supports adherence technology pilot in Karnataka

Members of the KHPT program team participated in a national Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on March 20 for the implementation of a pilot program on Integrated Digital Adherence Technologies (IDAT) in Karnataka. This multi-state initiative, supported by the Central TB Division, is designed to improve treatment adherence through technological innovations chosen by patients according to their convenience and contexts. THALI is an implementation partner for the initiative in Belagavi, Bijapur, Bagalkot, Bangalore Urban and Tumkur districts of Karnataka. Members of the team attended trainings in Surat and Mewat before facilitating trainings in all five districts between April 22 and 27. The trainings, conducted by Everwell and PATH, introduced the features and utility of each technology and included hands-on demonstrations for participants, including Senior Treatment Supervisors and TB Health Visitors from the RNTCP and field staff from the Joint Effort for the Elimination of Tuberculosis (JEET) program. The THALI communications team edited the partners’ videos on each of the technologies -99DOTS, the Easy Cure box, Video Observed Therapy (VOT) and Operation ASHA—for ease of use of frontline workers, as well as senior health facility staff. The team produced a 5-minute video for participants, which modelled the treatment supporter’s interactions with the patient, enabling her to choose the right technology by providing her the correct information.

It's TIME: World TB Day 2019

THALI initiatives recognized at World TB Day events

KHPT supported the state government in the planning and execution of the World TB Day event held at Bengaluru Medical College on March 24. The THALI program team helped in the development of the state fact sheet on TB and designed the logos and slogans on T-shirts produced by the state for the occasion, in line with the WHO’s theme for 2019: It’s Time. THALI also assisted officials in BBMP, Bengaluru Urban and Kolar in designing their campaign brochures and pamphlets.

KHPT’s efforts to eliminate TB in Karnataka were acknowledged at the state event in Bengaluru, which was attended by officials, NGO and medical students. Dignitaries at the event released a set of briefs on THALI’s innovations towards patient-centric care, including the TB Caroline, the Specimen Collection and Transportation System and the Differentiated Care Model.

In Davangere, Dr Raghavan, District TB Officer, reviewed THALI’s community engagement activities in the district and presented them an award in appreciation for their efforts towards TB elimination in Davangere.

Community structure and KOL engagement on World TB Day

THALI teams across the states included Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) and community structures identified by the program in World TB Day events at the community level. THALI CHWs in Belagavi district held a series of 34 workshops from March 20-29, conducted in collaboration with the Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) identified by THALI and RNTCP staff. They highlighted the importance of community efforts, particularly those of youth, girls and mothers, to eliminate TB. 969 people, including adolescent girls, mothers, youth and KOLs attended these workshops. A screening found 30 TB symptoms and referred for testing.

A masonry workers’ union in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, which is working toward TB elimination in the community, observed World TB Day with a meeting of 40 members of the union, who discussed about what needed to be done in their community to support TB patients. They resolved to provide nutrition support to patients in their area and requested the CHWs to provide patient details and requirements. This will be taken forward in April.

THALI patient advocates take the stage at The Union World Lung Health Conference preparatory meeting

Patient advocates actively engage with TB programs across Telangana and AP

Patient advocates identified by TBAL in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh (API) have been raising their voices and sharing their experiences at state events and stakeholder meetings. At World TB Day events organized by the states, patient advocates including Mohammed Saleem from Hyderabad, J. Rahul from Warangal, N. Ramulu from Karimnagar, Gouri Kour from Nizamabad and E. Adinarayana from Visakhapatnam inspired audiences with their testimonies about beating TB and helping those in their communities. All these patient advocates were felicitated by the RNTCP for their involvement in TB control efforts at the community level.

TBAL has been steadily building the capacity of patient advocates to improve their abilities to represent the TB patient community at various platforms. 18 patient advocates shared their experiences at a preparatory meeting for The Union’s 50th World Lung Health Conference to be held in Hyderabad from October 30 – November 2. TBAL CHWs also began involving patient advocates in individual interactions and counselling sessions with patients. They found that matching patient vulnerabilities was effective during counselling, a Drug-Resistant TB (DRTB) or diabetic patient was more receptive to a patient advocate with DRTB or diabetes.
Developed symptoms. Hospital. They rallied the support of doctors at the community, and to get tested if they developing TB. Members of the CBO agreed to testing, and three were found positive for TB. The importance of testing and treatment adherence, especially among populations at high risk of developing TB. Members of the CBO agreed to increase awareness within their network and among the community, and to get tested if they developed symptoms.

The workshop also provided an opportunity to discuss the team’s progress on engaging community structures and using communication materials.

Product developed
Briefs

Voices from the field
“I am delighted that the voices of my daughter and the entire community of people affected by TB will be heard at the Union World Conference. We cannot end the TB emergency unless TB survivors are positioned at the front and centre of the response.”

N Saritha, a TB advocate identified by TBAT. Her 13-year-old daughter Maheswari has been cured of TB.

“Technology cannot stand alone by itself. You will have to develop communication and counselling skills to ensure that the patient makes an informed choice about the technology they will use to improve their treatment adherence.”

Dr Suresh Shastri, Joint Director- IEC, addressing participants at the IDAT training in Bengaluru.

“I am attending regular monthly patient support group meetings and my CHW suggested we use a nutritious food called Energy Dense Food (EDF). I tried it and really enjoyed it. The recipes were easy to follow, nutritious and tasty. My CHW also provided me with an abundance of information and tips which I continue to use daily to help me make informed decisions about what I eat.”

Gousia Firdose, a patient, Bengaluru.