

European Respiratory Society Annual Congress 2012

Abstract Number: 1722
Publication Number: P2860

Abstract Group: 10.2. Tuberculosis

Keyword 1: Epidemiology **Keyword 2:** Occupation **Keyword 3:** No keyword

Title: Pattern of tuberculosis (TB) among health care Workers (HCW) attending a revised national TB control programme (RNTCP) unit in Kottayam Medical College (Kerala India)

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Body: Background. There is paucity of data with regard to pattern of TB in HCW Aim. To study the pattern of TB among HCW. Study setting RNTCP unit of a Medical College in Kerala, India from October 2009-March 2011. Methods Clinical profile of patients referred to RNTCP unit with a proven diagnosis or with a clinical and radiologic diagnosis made by a specialist medical teacher were gathered by a preset oral questionnaire and clinical examination. Result Out of 1222 TB patients 5.72% (n= 70) were HCW.90% of HCW (n 63) were nurses or nursing students, 10 % (n 7) were paramedical staff.No doctors or medical students registered in control programme for treatment. 68.6% (n= 48) had extra pulmonary TB & 31.4% (n 22) pulmonary TB (OD 2.725). 63.6% (14/22) of pulmonary TB was smear positive. Occurrence of TB lymphadenitis (n 24) and abdominal TB (n 5) were more common among HCW compared to general category patients (p value of <0.05). 92.8% were newly diagnosed (n 65), 4.2% (n 3) retreatment & 2.8% (n 2) MDR. None had brain or menigieal TB .92.8% were BCG vaccinated. Conclusion TB lymphadenitis was more common among HCW compared to general category patients. Majority of HCW coming for treatment in RNTCP were nurses or nursing students. No doctors registered for treatment in control programme. References 1) Gopinath KG, Siddique S, Kirubakaran H, Shanmugam A, Mathai E, Chandy GM. Tuberculosis among healthcare workers in a tertiary-care hospital in South India. J Hosp Infect. 2004;57:339–42 2) Behera D, Khayyam et al Indian Journal of Tuberculosis 2010 Oct 57(4)192-198.