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Title: Success of the patient-oriented approach to MDR-TB treatment in Tomsk Oblast, Russia, 2000-2009

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Body: In 2000-2009, 1141 MDR TB patients were treated in Tomsk Oblast (civilian sector). MDR-TB treatment effectiveness: 63.1% - cured, 12.6% - failed, 8.3% - died, 15.9 - defaulted. Since 2005, a patient-oriented approach has been developed (daily food packages for patients' motivation, treatment at home, Red Cross volunteers, anti-alcohol campaign, searching for patients who miss treatment using social and psychological support - "Sputnik" program etc.). This approach resulted in default decrease from 29.3% (2003) to 10.4% (2009). MDR-TB reservoir decreased from 823 patients (2002) to 380 (2011), including 291 patients who are still on treatment. From 2004 to 2011: TB incidence among new cases (per 100 000) decreased from 105.6 to 75.3 (by 28.6%), TB prevalence - from 205.2 to 104.9 (by 48.9%), TB mortality - from 17.7 to 5.8 (by 67.2%). "Minor TB forms" (smear negative, without lung destruction) among new cases increased from 25% (2005) to 40% (2011). Conclusions: The patient-oriented approach significantly improved TB situation in Tomsk Oblast. We are concerned that patients with "minor TB forms" who are not provided with in-depth examination might be admitted to general health care settings and treated for pneumonia using fluoroquinolones.