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Title: Childhood tuberculosis in Romania

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Body: Introduction: TB incidence rate in children sharply decreased in Romania in the last decade. TB etiology is difficult to confirm, as the sample for bacteriological examination is obtained in low proportion of cases. For this reason the diagnosis can often be overlooked. Aim and objectives: To analyze the trend and the profile of TB epidemic in children in Romania. Method: The trend of TB incidence rate in children has been observed in Romania in the last decade and all children with TB diagnosis notified in 2009 have been analyzed by gender, residence, age group, treatment history, site and extension of disease, bacteriological status and treatment outcome. Data have been extracted from National TB Register. Results: TB incidence rate in children failed from 2001 (47.3%000) to 2010 (25.3%000). In the 965 children registered with TB in Romania in 2009, the male/female ratio was 1.1 and urban/rural ratio 0.87. By age group 49 (5.1%) had less than 1 year, 338 (35%) were in 1-4 years age group and 578 (59.9%) in 5-14 years age group. From the total number of 965, new cases represented 98.7%, 14.9% had severe forms of the disease (30 meningitis, 8 miliaria and 106 with cazeo-cavitary pulmonary lesions), 39.3% had pulmonary TB and of them smear and culture positivity rates were 14% and respectively 25.8%. Of 98 culture positive cases, only 34 (34.7%) had a DST and of them 2 (5.9%) had MDR-TB. Overall outcome was favorable in 96.4% of pulmonary cases, but 2 children deceased, 2 failed and 8 abandoned the treatment. Conclusion: Despite the decrease in incidence rate in Romania, there are still many challenges in the control of TB epidemic in childhood, as early detection of cases, proper diagnostic with confirmation of the etiology and successful treatment.