**IHESIE\_FINAL\_SUBMITTED ABSTRACTS – 2 – THE UNION CONFERENCE HAGUE, 2018**

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| Track: | W- TB laboratory service implementation |
| Abstract language: | English |
| **Title:** | **Optimizing TB diagnosis and GeneXpert utilization using a courier for specimen transport in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria - A two-year review** |
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| Text: | **Background and challenges to implementation:** The scale up of GeneXpert in Nigeria has been faced with challenges of poor utilization and long turn-around-time for results. To compliment other interventions initiated by the National TB program, a courier service was engaged by Challenge TB in 2016 as a pilot for specimen transport to GeneXpert sites to address challenges and improve outcomes. **Intervention or response:** In 2016, four motorbike courier riders were recruited to transport sputum-specimen and ensure results retrieval from GeneXpert sites in Akwa Ibom State, following a hub and spoke matching of GeneXpert sites (hubs) to DOTS facilities (spokes). The couriers were trained on specimen handling, bio-safety procedures and completion of recording and reporting tools. A review of the state's GeneXpert data was conducted for 2015 - 2017; delivery registers were reviewed of the couriers for 2016 - 2017. **Results and lessons learnt:** Between 2015 and 2017, the number of GeneXpert tests performed increased exponentially with incremental introduction of sample transport (**See table 1**). The average turn-around-time for test results being sent back to facilities was reduced with introduction of courier services from 6 days to 3-4 days. A high yield of MTB positives was achieved from samples transported. For Akwa Ibom state, the courier intervention was attributed to 10% of all TB cases in 2016 which increased to 20% of all TB cases in 2017. **Conclusions and key recommendations:** The courier service in Akwa Ibom contributed significantly to the optimization of GeneXpert machines for TB diagnosis. This intervention can be scaled up in similar settings.   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Time Period (Year) | # (%) GeneXpert tests performed in the state | # (%) of samples transported by courier | Average turn-around-time for results | # (%) of MTB+ couriered samples | | 2015 (Baseline) | 1,469 | 0 (0%) | 6 days | 0 (0%) | | 2016 (Intervention) | 7,899 | 2,222 (28%) | 3 days | 288 (12.9%) | | 2017 (Intervention) | 16,571 | 5,223 (32%) | 4 days | 595 (11.4%) |   *[Table 1: Courier intervention results (2016-17) compared to baseline (2015)]* |
| **Option:** | **Option 2: Suited for public health practice submissions.** |
| **Preferred Presentation Type:** | **Poster discussion** |
| Track: | D- Civil society and community engagement |
| Abstract language: | English |
| **Title:** | **Leaders wanted for a TB free World: Exploring prospects of community influencers for TB case finding in low reporting districts in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.** |
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| Text: | **Background and challenges to implementation:** Poor health seeking behavior is a major contributor to low TB case notification despite significant investments in facility-based TB control interventions. Community influencers can significantly shape decisions and health seeking behavior of community members. With strategic engagement, this resource can be deployed to increase community demand for TB services. **Intervention or response:** Thirty community influencers consisting of community leaders, youth leaders, women leaders, church leaders, patent medicine vendors, a traditional healer and a sanitary chairman from 6 priority low-reporting districts were selected for pilot engagement (between April-September, 2017) in tuberculosis control activities in Akwa Ibom State by Challenge TB. They received orientation on awareness creation, identification of presumptive TB cases, referral to TB quality-assured laboratories and appropriate documentation. A linkage to district TB-service providers was also established during orientation to strengthen referrals **Results and lessons learnt:** Between April-September 2016 and April-September 2017, the number of presumptive TB cases tested in the 6 priority districts increased by >100% following the engagement of community influencers (see table). Comparing the same period, the number of TB cases notified increased by 50%. Community influencers' activities accounted for 67% of the increase in presumptive TB cases and 80% of the increase in TB cases notified, comparing the baseline to the intervention period. **Conclusions and key recommendations**: Community influencers can help improve TB case finding in areas with low TB case notification. This intervention should be explored for scale up.   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Period | Total number of presumptive TB cases reported | # (%) of presumptive TB cases referred by community influencers | Total number of TB cases reported | # (%) of TB cases from community influencers | | April-September 2016 (Baseline) | 426 | 0 | 82 | 0 | | April-September 2017 (Intervention) | 965 | 361 (37%) | 126 | 35 (28%) | | Increase between baseline and intervention periods | 539 | 361 (67%) | 44 | 35 (80%) |   *[Community influencers intervention results (April–September 2017) compared to baseline (April-September 2016).]* |
| **Option:** | **Option 2: Suited for public health practice submissions.** |
| **Preferred Presentation Type:** | **Poster discussion** |