

Progress and Implementation of Surveillance of Directly Observed Treatment, Short-Course (DOTS) for Tuberculosis in Taiwan

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Abstract

DOTS (directly observed treatment, short-course) was recommended by WHO since 1994 as an important Stop TB strategy to help people during their treatment.

On April, 2005, Taiwan initiated DOTS program for smear-positive patients, and extended coverage for other patients gradually, inclusive of culture-positive patients, clinically diagnosed patients with bad compliance, homelessness patients, relapsed patients, patients in mountainous area, aboriginal patients, etc. Nowadays, all patients undergoing TB medication are required to be under DOTS. And for patient who does not fulfil the criteria for bacteriological confirmation, DOTS should be implemented for at least 2 months.

Besides increase of implementation rate, Taiwan CDC pursues high-quality DOTS as well. Surveillance of DOTS implementation quality was started on July, 2010. By December, 2013, DOTS implementation rate and proportion of quality level A both exceed 90% for bacteriologically confirmed patients.

There are now more than 700 health care workers as DOTS observers to help patients taking treatment correctly. And the DOTS program was achieving phenomenal results that TB relapse rate in Taiwan decreased from 1.3% in 2005 cohort to 0.6% in 2009 cohort.

Key word: Tuberculosis, DOTS, relapse, DOTS implementation quality

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