

Original Article

Plan to Halve TB in 10 Years: Review and Prospect

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Abstract

International organizations including UN, WHO, and Stop TB partnership, are now coordinating in tackling tuberculosis (TB) and helping to build a TB-free world. World economic forum (WEF) also considers TB as one of crucial determinants to global competitiveness. In Taiwan, TB poses a significant threat to not only public health and social productivity, but also to the country's image.

The Executive Yuan first approved "National Mobilization Plan to Halve TB in 10 Years" in 2006 and subsequently phase 2 plan in 2010. Seven years after the plan being enacted, TB incidence rate declined from 72.5 to 53 per 100,000 from 2005 to 2013, while mortality rate also decreased from 4.3 to 2.7 per 100,000 from 2005 to 2013. Our efforts in implementing strategies to stop TB are affirmed by international experts.

Control and prevention of TB requires a platform of coordinated support of public health, medical and laboratory systems. "The plan to halve TB in 10 years" was accordingly aiming at developing a comprehensive national program to strengthen resources across all levels of these systems, with priority given to improvement of case management, medical practice quality, and prevention of TB in high-risk populations. This article focuses on several significant TB control measures in Taiwan, inclusive of "DOTS program", "air travel restriction policy", "MDR-TB medical care system", "enhancement of contact investigation", "latent TB infection treatment program" and "broadening of active case finding in high risk population", through actions of implementing these programs, our society is moving towards a world free of TB.

Key word: tuberculosis, infectious disease, halve TB in 10 years, national TB control program

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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