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Editorial

India's 100-day TB-elimination campaign: An important step towards achieving the national goals

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ABSTRACT

Tuberculosis is known for ages and continues to haunt the fragile healthcare systems in developing countries. India is a high-burden country for tuberculosis. Further, India aims to eliminate tuberculosis five years earlier than the global targets. To achieve these targets, the Indian government has launched a nationwide tuberculosis campaign for 100 days. This editorial sheds light on this important step in tuberculosis elimination.

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Editorial

Tuberculosis, a disease that is the result of an infection by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* is looming large in countries like India. The disease is a major contributor to morbidity and mortality.¹ Post COVID-19 India has intensified its efforts to achieve a significant improvement in tuberculosis care.² However, still a lot of efforts are required to achieve the goal of tuberculosis elimination from India by 2025, which is five years earlier than the global targets.¹ To achieve this, the Government of India launched a 100-day intensified campaign to eliminate tuberculosis. This campaign was launched by Union Health Minister Mr. Jagat Prakash Nadda on 7th December 2024.³

The main aims of the intensified campaign are to increase tuberculosis case detection, decrease diagnostic

delays, and improve treatment results, especially in high-risk populations.^{3,4} Implemented in 347 districts in 33 states and union territories, the program will be a component of the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme.⁴ In addition to the individuals with complaints of cough and high-grade fever for more than 15 days, loss of appetite, heavy weight loss, sleeplessness, breathlessness, chest pain, and hemoptysis, the campaign will screen about 250 million vulnerable individuals from 347 high-risk districts across the nation, including family members of tuberculosis patients, those who have previously had tuberculosis, those who have diabetes or HIV, those who smoke or drink excessively, and those with a body mass index of less than 18.5.⁵ The campaign also includes “Ni-kshay Vahaan” or mobile vans, which will travel to these districts and diagnose and treat the cases.⁶

The campaign aims to improve program performance on important output metrics, such as death rates, diagnostic

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coverage, and tuberculosis incidence rates. Additionally, it is in line with recent policy improvements made by the Ministry, such as the inclusion of household contacts under the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan social assistance program and more financial aid (1000 rupees per month) for tuberculosis patients under the Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana.⁷

The campaign has given remarkable results in the first week since its initiation with the detection of 16,267 new tuberculosis cases. Through 850 mobile testing vans and camps at health and wellness centers, the initiative actively screens vulnerable populations. Over five lakh individuals have undergone screening.⁵

To conclude, the new intensive 100-day tuberculosis elimination campaign is a welcome step in the fight against tuberculosis. It is a well-planned campaign, and already the results are evident from the data available from the first week. The campaign would help immensely in diagnosing the tuberculosis cases actively and would help in bringing the numbers of missed cases down significantly. However, constant supervision and monitoring are essential to avoid issues that would affect the results. Further, the campaign would help remarkably in increasing the awareness about tuberculosis, and that would help in reducing the stigma against the patients.

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.


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