

"ENHANCING ACCESS FOR TB PREVENTION AND TREATMENT: PWUD COMMUNITY PEER LED STRATEGIES FOR TB CASE IDENTIFICATION AMONG PWUD IN TEMEKE, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA.

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Background

People Who Use Drugs (PWUD) are at high risk of tuberculosis (TB) infections due to their low immunity, shelter, and the environments where they use drugs. Most PWUD remain undiagnosed and reached in their hotspots due to life style factors, and because health care providers often view PWUD as hard to reach and retain in care. In 2014 at Muhimbili MAT clinic, 150 PWUD who are on MAT services were screened for TB and 16 found with TB symptoms which is 4%.

Description:

Women Support Group (WWUD led CSO) conducted a TB case finding project among PWUD in Temeke district in three wards; Tandika, Mtoni and Sandali. Case finding was done through PWUD peer-led outreach into PWUD hotspots, brothels and houses. After initial education and screening among PWUD, those with suspected TB infection were escorted to the health facility early the following day for further TB diagnosis procedures.

Findings:

In 2023 and 2024 Women Support Group educated and screened 94 PWUD (59 males and 35 females) for TB, 79 PWUD (49 males and 27 females) had suspected TB infection, and after diagnosis; 40 PWUD were confirmed to be positive with TB (29 males and 11 females). TB prevalence for all PWUD educated and screened was 80.9%, (83% males and 77 females) TB prevalence for suspected and diagnosed for all PWUD was 53% (59% male and 41% female).

Conclusion and lesson learned:

PWUD community peer led TB case finding approaches, enhance the reach and diagnosis of PWUD for TB prevention and treatment. Peer led approaches increase TB case identification among PWUD as most community health care providers are not comfortable reaching PWUD or providing testing and treatment services in PWUD hotspots. However, peer led approaches support easier tracing and follow up for PWUD to avoid interruptions TB treatment.