

TB/HIV COMMUNITY ACTIVISM: KEY COMPONENTS OF A HEALTH SYSTEMS RESPONSE

Integrating TB treatment literacy into HIV support

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Outline



- Treatment Advocacy & Literacy Campaign (TALC)
- TL trainings
- TL information dissemination
- How and why TALC integrated TB in their HIV support
- TB/HIV work
- Recommendations

Background



- TALC is a Zambian NGO formed to fight for equitable and sustainable access to HIV treatment, care and support for people living with HIV (PLHA).
- HIV Advocacy and treatment literacy initially just for PLHA
- Trainings: Advocacy skills, HIV/treatment literacy-basic science of HIV,

Why did TALC come to address TB?

- TALC was registered in 2004 focusing only on HIV treatment and advocacy
- TB integration – most member co-infected and need to create same environment for TB
- Emerging drug resistant TB:-
 - Danger of DR TB among PLHA
- IPT – information on its benefits for PLHA
- Public Health Watch/OSI Research project

OSI M&A Project



- In 2006, TALC conducted a research and monitoring project to find out the status of implementation of the WHO Interim Policy on Collaborative TB-HIV Activities and the IEC gap.
- TALC was provided with training on TB/HIV basic science, TB tools challenges for TB/HIV, the TB/HIV Collaborative Policy framework, and some guidance on TB/HIV advocacy priorities.
- It was from this research that we as PLHA in TALC understood more about TB issues first hand, on the ground and why it was important that we integrate TB in our ongoing HIV work.
- OSI provided funding and capacity building for the organization and activities, TAG provided the training on the technical issues related to TB/HIV and advocacy

TB Integration Into HIV Treatment

Literacy Training



- Basic science of HIV (and TB)- life cycle
- Importance of adherence (to TB and HIV drugs):
what happens in ones body when one skips a dose
- Importance of HAART and TB treatment
- HIV and TB transmission, prevention, and care
- Human rights in the context of both TB and HIV

TB and HIV TL Information dissemination

- Free TL lessons at the TALC secretariat
- TOT – leaders of support groups, CBOs (who in turn train members in groups as well the communities in their catchment areas (methodology re: language barrier - role plays (life cycle))
- Cascading – in the community: drama, door to door sensitization, FGDs
- IEC – Posters, brochures (used in sensitization), quarterly newsletter (by PLHA and TB with no journalistic background)

OSI Public Health Watch Research Project

- Project – WHO Interim Policy on TB/HIV Collaborative activities – Zambia signatory to this policy
- TALC community researchers trained
- Areas covered: 3 provinces
- Key informants: Policy makers, affected communities, health care workers, NGOs,
- Methodology: desk interviews and/or questionnaires
- Findings: Separation of services health centre level, lack of information on co-infection and the WHO Interim Policy, lack on meaningful involvement of affected communities on the JCB etc

Impact of the OSI-TAG project on TALCs TB/HIV advocacy

- Increase knowledge on TB/HIV and active involvement of the co-infected community in the TB/HIV Joint Collaborative Body in Zambia.
- 3-day TB HIV co-infection training to increase knowledge and capacity of 15 TALC members to support subsequent advocacy activities
- 2-day training for 35 advocates, leaders of CBOs, support groups from 3 provinces
- 1 day stakeholders meeting with key stakeholders in TB and HIV field
- Increased coverage of TB in TALCs newsletter
- Increased demand on TALCs membership to seek out TB diagnostics and awareness of symptoms- Intensified Case Detection
- Advocacy to create HIV desks at TB clinics and vice versa

Impact contd...



- TALC being invited to TB/HIV meetings at national level sitting at the table as a partner
- Support group members at clinics giving HIV health talks at TB corner and vice versa
- More people asking for information about the co-infection e.g. IPT by PLHA
- More uptake of either services noted at some clinics
- More TB/HIV support groups being formed

TALC Future plans

- TB science training for HIV advocates, community health care workers e.g. TB and HIV supporters (modes of transmission – myths)
- Advocacy around the 3 I's: Intensified case finding, Infection control, IPT
- TB/HIV support groups (TB Champions as role models)
- Massive IEC campaign:- IEC (patients charter), door to door sensitization, electronic media (community radio)
- Community mobilisation: early referral to health services (once people are aware that TB though transmittable is curable and treatment is free)

How can TB communities support HIV activists to take on TB?

- Provide us with information. Information is POWER. Help us understand why TB is a concern for PLWHA
- Communities are much more than just DOTS supporters and have a bigger role to play in the collaborative activities. Create a supportive policy and program environment that encourages this leadership in policy, research, resource allocation and program implementation, ESPECIALLY on the national level.
- HIV and TB programs need to budget into their programs efforts that will support civil society partners in doing this important work.

How communities can support HIV and TB programs

- Activists can increase political support and resources for TB and TB/HIV on national and global level
- Creating an activist movement for TB/HIV can create demand for increased collaboration at local/national levels (e.g. TB info desk at VCT sites and ART centres and vice versa)
- The HIV community can improve program outcomes, especially for treatment completion, infection control, and intensified case finding.

Conclusion



We are the ultimate beneficiaries of these services and our insights will be critical in improving the service delivery and outcome measures.

TB has been 'medicalized' for too long and the fight against TB needs our support and for us to work together.



Thank you,

Merci