



Tuberculosis Control System in Armenia [civilian and penitentiary sectors]

Armenia is facing a serious reemerging threat from tuberculosis (TB). Armenia is ranked the 10th highest for TB incidence rate among the 53 WHO European Region countries. This threat has increased significantly as the rates of drug resistant strains of TB have grown.

A professional research team from the Center for Health Services Research and Development conducted qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 63 participants from different levels and sectors of TB control, including patients. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) supported this research within the Hand-over and Take-over Review.

Study participants provided a number of strengths in the TB control system in Armenia. The establishment of the National TB Program (NTP) provided a national infrastructure for TB control. Free TB services and TB medication are provided to the entire population.

Some of the leading challenges identified included the problems in recruiting and retaining qualified professionals in TB control in both penitentiary and civilian sectors due to lower compensation and fewer benefits. Participants also indicated about the lack of modern standards for infection control in TB, inadequate physical infrastructure and substandard equipment and supplies.

In addition, the participants widely indicated that there was a lack of capacity to conduct rigorous Directly Observed Therapy Short-course (DOTS) in the civilian sector and to expand DOTS+ to both civilian and penitentiary sectors. Recommendations to meet these challenges include improving supportive supervision, developing quality control systems, increasing resources in TB control and further developing protocols, procedures and regulations.

One of the important findings was the stigma and fear of TB that exist among both the general population and health care workers. This stigma has contributed to late utilization of TB services, negative social consequences and spread of disease. Apart from improvement in health care system, the participants recommended campaigns as part of TB control to change the negative attitudes and stigma among the general public.

The findings suggest that a transitional collaboration between the NTP with its national expertise and the ICRC and the Médecins Sans Frontières France (MSF) with their international experience may most effectively improve TB control and resolve the deficiencies in the newly decentralized TB control system.



IN THIS ISSUE:

- ✧ *Tuberculosis Control System in Armenia [page 1]*
- ✧ *Sharing with International Community [page 2]*
- ✧ *Monitoring and Evaluation Training Workshop [page 3]*
- ✧ *Latest News [page 4]:*
 - *Professor Armenian Presents the Case-Control Method in New Book*
 - *The Global Tobacco Epidemic: Addressing It Here and Now*
 - *The Global Increase in Dental Caries. A Public Health Crisis*
 - *Pharmacoeconomic Evaluation: A Tool in Medical Decision Making*

SHARING WITH INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

▲ Sevoyan M, Sarkisian T, Beglaryan A, Shahsuvaryan G, Armenian H. Prevention of Amyloidosis in Familial Mediterranean Fever with Colchicine: a Case-Control Study in Armenia. *Medical Principles and Practice* 115, 2009

▲ Armenian H, Kazandjian V, Thompson M. Parallels in Health Care Evaluation and Educational Assessment. *The Network: Towards Unity for Health (Newsletter)*, June 2009; 28(1):11-13

▲ Harutyunyan T, Demirchyan A, Thompson M, Petrosyan V. Patient satisfaction with primary care in Armenia: Good rating of bad services? *Health Services Management Journal*, 2009

▲ Thompson M, Harutyunyan T. Impact of a Community-based Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) Program in Gegharkunik, Armenia. *Health Policy and Planning. Advance Access* published January 15, 2009

▲ Armenian H. Epidemiology: a Problem Solving Journey. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2009 169(2):127-131

▲ Demirchyan A, Thompson M. E. Determinants of self-rated health in women: A population-based study in Armavir marz, Armenia, 2001 & 2004 *International Journal of Equity in Health* 2008 Dec 12; 7:25

▲ Thompson M, Petrosyan V. Needs Assessment: American University of Armenia College of Health Sciences. In Public Health Workforce Capacity Building by Goodman J, Overall J, Tulchinsky T. *ASPHER Publication* No. 3, April 2008



Narine Movsisyan and colleagues from Johns Hopkins University IGTC at the 14th World Conference on Tobacco or Health, Mumbai, India

CONFERENCES

AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, June 28-30, 2009, Chicago, IL, USA

▲ Harutyunyan T, Demirchyan A, Thompson M, Petrosyan V. *Patient Satisfaction with Primary Care in Armenia: Are Standard Measurements Informative?*

▲ Petrosyan V, Grigoryan R, Truzyan N, Martirosyan H, Crape B. *TB Control System in Armenia [civilian and penitentiary sectors]*

▲ Petrosyan V, Udumyan R, Piligian G, Zelveian P. *Systemic Hypertension & Risk of Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome: A Case- Control Study in Yerevan, Armenia*

▲ Petrosyan V, Anderson G. *Hospital Expenses in the United States: State Level Analysis*

14th World Conference on Tobacco or Health, March 8-12, 2009, Mumbai, India

▲ Movsisyan N, Sahakyan K, Petrosyan V. *Household smoking rules in Armenia*

▲ Movsisyan N, Stillman F, Donaldson E. *Epidemiology & Intervention Research for Tobacco Control in Armenia*



Anahit Demirchyan at the 16th EUPHA Conference, Lisbon, Portugal

16th EUPHA Conference: I-health: health and innovation in Europe, 6-8 November 2008, Lisbon, Portugal

▲ Demirchyan A, Thompson M. *Determinants of self-rated health in women: a population based study in Armavir marz, Armenia, 2001 and 2004*

▲ Movsisyan N, Sahakyan K, Petrosyan V. *Smoking and quitting patterns in Armenia*

XVII International AIDS Conference, 3-8 August, 2008, Mexico City, USA

▲ Lang D, Markosyan K, DiClemente R, Mnatsakanyan N, Khachatryan M, Darbinyan N. *Correlates of condom use errors among FSWs in Yerevan, Armenia*

▲ Markosyan K, Lang D, DiClemente R, Mnatsakanyan N, Khachatryan M, Darbinyan N. *Prevalence and correlates of inconsistent condom use among FSWs in Yerevan, Armenia*

Fighting Tuberculosis in Armenia: Stakeholders review of TB situation in Armenia, both in prisons and civilian sector, as part of ICRC's handing over its TB support to prisons, October 10, 2008, Yerevan, Armenia

▲ Petrosyan V. *Analysis of TB Control System in Armenia in Both Civilian and Penitentiary Sectors (stakeholder analysis)*

▲ Grigoryan R, Antonyan M. *Legislative and Regulatory Approaches to TB Control in Armenia (legal review)*

Monitoring and Evaluation Training Workshop

Supported by the Framework Convention Alliance, American Cancer Society and the International Union Against Cancer, CHSR organized a highly demanded and successful training course on tobacco control programs' evaluation in March 2009. The goal of the training was to extend the knowledge and understanding of tobacco control issues, introduce monitoring and evaluation methods, and strengthen public support to FCTC implementation in the country in Armenia.

Not only members of the Coalition for Tobacco Free Armenia but also other NGOs interested in tobacco control policy advocacy and monitoring applied for participation in the training.

Seventeen NGO and two Ministry of Health representatives were selected to participate in the training. This should benefit the tobacco control in Armenia both in terms of future state-civil society cooperation and also in upgrading the health officials' approach to tobacco control and evaluation issues.



Participants of the Monitoring and Evaluation Training Workshop held in Tsakhkadzor, Armenia

The CHSR/AUA team developed the training materials and put together a training package for each participant. The materials included a Fact Book in Armenian language. The Fact Book contained materials on FCTC background, FCTC process and its current status, epidemiologic data on smoking in Armenia, policy documents and other related materials. The training package included the lecture notes and different tobacco control related publications, and other relevant materials.

The three-day training took place in Tsakhkadzor town, 20-22 March 2009. The training workshop aimed to build basic knowledge, skills and competencies in monitoring and evaluation methods needed for the successful implementation of tobacco control programs, including:

- ▲ underlying evidence base for FCTC (international studies and experience)
- ▲ understanding the role of program evaluation through case-studies
- ▲ evaluation goals and methods
- ▲ monitoring and observation
- ▲ smoking burden in Armenia
- ▲ tobacco control policy implementation in Armenia.

The training team included teaching faculty, public health researchers and practitioners, and the project assistant.

Mixed methods were employed: lecturing combined with presenting case studies with group work to ensure interactive process; in addition, the participants were required to do some homework for better understanding and skills acquisition. The team presentations were scored by the other teams and the members of the best presenting team received a book on healthy lifestyle.

In addition to in-class activities, there were two extra-curriculum events: 1) a discussion meeting with the NGO representatives about future collaborative efforts, and 2) watching the movie "The Insider" (about tobacco control related events in the US).

The participants provided very positive feedback on the training workshop through a self-administered anonymous survey.

LATEST NEWS

Professor Armenian Presents the Case-Control Method in New Book

On June 4, Haroutune K. Armenian, M.D., Dr.P.H., presented his new book, *The Case-Control Method* published by Oxford University Press, at the special lecture and book signing ceremony at the American University of Armenia (AUA). Dr. Armenian is the President of the American University of Armenia, Professor in residence at the UCLA and Professor Emeritus at Johns Hopkins University. His career in epidemiology has spanned a number of countries of the world with a focus on the application of epidemiologic methods to disasters, health services and chronic diseases.

Based on an experience of teaching the case-control method over a period of 20 years to students from a number of professional backgrounds at the Department of Epidemiology of the Bloomberg School of Public Health of the Johns Hopkins University, this textbook addresses a number of general and specific questions dealing with the case-control and other case-based methods. A major part of the book provides a wealth of applications of the case-control and case-based methods on outbreak investigation, genetic epidemiology, evaluation of interventions, evaluation of screening programs, and other applications.

Dr. Armenian donated signed copies of the book to the Soghikian Public Health Reference Room and Papazian Library at AUA, libraries of the Ministry of Health of Armenia, Yerevan State Medical University, and National Institute of Health.



May 29, 2009: Dr. Robert Bagramian, Dean of the College of Health Sciences at the American University of Armenia and a professor at the University of Michigan at the public lecture on "The Global Increase in Dental Caries. A Pending Public Health Crisis".

June 2, 2009: Dr. Frances Stillman, Associate Professor, MSc at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health at the public lecture on "The Global Increase in Dental Caries. A Pending Public Health Crisis".

July 9, 2009: Michael Iskedjian, BPharm, MSc at the public lecture on "Pharmacoeconomic Evaluation: A Tool in Medical Decision Making".

To learn more

about the College of Health Sciences please contact:

Phone: (+374 10) 51 25 92

Fax: (+374 10) 51 25 66, or

E-mail: mphinfo@aua.am

40 Marshal Baghramian Avenue

Yerevan 0019, Republic of Armenia

www.aua.am, www.auachsr.com

Giving to AUA

Are you interested in contributing to AUA? We hope so! Many opportunities exist to donate including establishing a scholarship, transferring Stocks or other negotiable assets, making a donation which is matched by your employer, and by donation through check or credit card. The American University of Armenia Corporation is a registered IRC Section 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. Please contact AUA's development office at (510) 987-9125 or donations@auac.net for more information.