

Rifampicin resistant TB patients in Myanmar in 2016: How many are lost in the path to treatment?

Kyaw Ko Ko Htet, Kyaw Thu Soe, Ajay MV Kumar, Saw Saw, Htet Myet Win Maung, Tin Mi Mi Khine, Si Thu Aung.

(Int J Tuberc Lung Dis 2017; 22(4):385-392.)

Abstract

Regional TB centers of Yangon and Mandalay Regions of Myanmar, accounting for 65% of all notified rifampicin resistant tuberculosis (RR-TB) cases country wide. Among RR-TB patients diagnosed in Gene xpert laboratories during January-August 2016 and residing in Yangon and Mandalay region, 1) to determine initial loss to follow-up (LFU) 2) to calculate the treatment delay of RR-TB patients and 3) To explore the factors associated with initial LFU and treatment delay of RR-TB patients residing in Yangon and Mandalay regions during January to August, 2016. In this retrospective cohort study, every diagnosed patient was tracked in the drug resistant TB treatment registers at the Yangon and Mandalay regional treatment centers for the period January-December, 2016 using patient name, age, sex, township and date of diagnosis. If the diagnosed patient was not found in the treatment register by 31st December 2016, it was regarded as initial LFU. Of 1037 RR-TB patients diagnosed, 310(30%) experienced initial LFU, which was significantly higher among patients aged ≥ 55 years and patients diagnosed in Mandalay region. Regarding the treatment delay, longer than one month treatment delay was observed in 440(70%) patients (median delay: 41 days). Delay was uniformly high across patient subgroups and no factor was found. Initial LFU and treatment delays among RR-TB patients were high. Qualitative research is needed to ascertain reasons for the same.