

A Mixed-method Study on Psychosocial Barriers and Challenges Experienced by Multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis Patients and their Caregivers through the Course of Diagnosis and Treatment in Chengalpattu District

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Abstract

Background: With one-third of the world's drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB) cases, India is one of the nations with the highest number of patients. Limited treatment options, long duration of treatment, and associated toxicity adversely impact the physical and mental well-being of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) patients. **Objectives:** The study describes the challenges and psychosocial barriers faced by MDR-TB patients and their caregivers throughout the diagnosis and treatment process. **Materials and Methods:** A mixed-method study was conducted among MDR-TB patients who are currently under treatment in Kancheepuram and Chengalpattu districts. A semistructured pretested questionnaire that had both quantitative and qualitative parts was used. **Results:** More than half of the patients (55.8%) had type II Diabetes Mellitus. The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 showed that 69.2% of the respondents had mild depressive symptoms. The challenges faced by the caregivers were: 19.2% felt an emotional rollercoaster, 32.8% had a financial burden, 25% had stress. **Conclusion:** In light of the identified challenges among the patients and caregivers of MDR-TB such as emotional and financial strain, stigma along with smoking and alcohol abuse, it is essential to address the above issues through multifaceted and integrated approach.

Key words: Challenges of caregivers, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, psychosocial barriers