

ADVOCACY WITH PROVINCIAL POLICY MAKERS

Date: 26th March 2014

Venue: Sheraz Hotel Peshawar

As part of the TB awareness campaign, the Provincial TB Control Programme Khyber Pakhtunkhwa arranged an advocacy session for policy makers at Sheraz Hotel, Peshawar on 26th March 2014. The ACSM Coordinator and Social Scientist of TB Control Programme facilitated the session.

Among key policy makers, the Additional Secretary Health (Dr. Anees Akhtar), Chief Planning and Development (Mr. Sher Gul Safi), Mr. Hafeez Ahmed (Planning Officer), Director General Health Services (Dr. S. Abdul Waheed Burki), Project Director (Dr. Ubaid Hussain), Provincial Manager GFATM (Dr. Maqsood Ali Khan), Provincial Technical Officer (Dr. Aamir Rafiq) and coordinators of TB Control Programme attended the session for their valuable input and guidance.

The Project Director welcomed all participants for their presence. Dr. Maqsood Ali Khan presented an overview of the programme and an introduction to TB in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Project Director also presented bills of 'TB as notifiable disease' and 'over-the-counter sale of TB drugs' which was discussed at length by the additional secretary health. The additional secretary health advised to take up these bills with the Minister Health after preliminary work so that the bills could be presented for legislation.

Mr. Aftabullah Khan (Social Scientist) briefed the forum on the ACSM strategy which is developed to assist in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of ACSM activities to influence behaviors and mobilize communities to create long term normative shifts towards desired behaviors. The strategy includes practical guidelines which are being developed jointly by



EPOS Health Management and the Provincial “Tuberculosis Control Programme, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa supported by the Government of Pakistan and KFW (German Development Bank).

For uniform implementation of ACSM strategy across all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the first part of the ToT workshop has been conducted with District TB Officers of all districts. One of the strong recommendations of the workshop expressed by the Director Health Services was to conduct a KAP survey for collecting baseline information on ACSM on urgent basis.

Mr. Bashar (ACSM Coordinator) presented an introduction to the ongoing KAP study on Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) for TB which is part of the Advocacy, Communication and Social mobilization (ACSM) strategy to collect baseline information on the subject.

RH-AID is a research firm assigned to conduct the said study in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The team of RH-AID has collected data in four districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Charsadda, D. I. Khan, Abbottabad and Lower Dir to estimate and gather baseline information on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of general and specified population related to TB. The data has been collected from general population through household questionnaire whereas for qualitative data, focus group discussions with both male and female TB Patients, healthcare providers/community based treatment observers, LHWs, District Health Authorities, NGOs/CBOs and community Influential (Political, Religious Leaders, Journalists, Teachers, Students).

A question and answer session was also conducted jointly by ACSM Coordinator and consultant for KAP which was followed by remarks of the Additional Secretary Health (Dr. Anees Akhtar). While highlighting the importance of research studies, the Additional Secretary Health appreciated the programme for conducting KAP study for TB and assured of all possible support to the programme for scaling up quality research studies in future.

The Director General Health Services stressed the need to maximize community awareness on TB. He directed the programme to arrange a dissemination workshop to share findings of KAP study as soon as the final report is submitted. He also emphasized that the findings of KAP study should be properly incorporated to the ACSM strategy. The DGHS also appreciated the programme for producing quality IEC material and branding the city with TB messages during World TB Day.

Towards the end of seminar, the Provincial Technical Officer (Dr. Aamir Rafiq) delivered vote of thanks to all participants of the seminar including partner organizations.