

Study on sociopsychological factors associated with diagnostic delay among pulmonary tuberculosis patients attending chest clinic pannai

Jayarathne SASD¹Lakshika HKDC¹, Samarasekara B², Kumaran.S³, Coonghe.P.A.D³

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

²Chest Clinic, Pannai Jaffna

³Department of Community and Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

Background: Tuberculosis (TB) is a major global problem which carries high mortality rate without proper treatment and can be cured completely with timely diagnosis and treatment. Delay in diagnosis of TB worsens the disease, causes spread of infection in the community, increases patient expenditure, and is associated with higher risk of mortality. Delayed diagnosis may be one of the reason why TB incidence has not declined substantially. Identifying the factors which cause diagnostic delay can help to take steps to deal with those factors and to get rid of them.

Methods: This study was carried out among the patients attending chest clinic at Pannai Jaffna who were registered in District tuberculosis registry. Data collection was done using an interviewer administered questionnaire. Questionnaire was designed to cover relevant data under the patient delay and diagnostic delay in Health care provider delay. The data under Socio psychological characteristics were believes of patients on pulmonary TB, first visited health care provider, lack of awareness about TB. Ethical clearance was obtained before data collection. Written permission was obtained from the director and Respiratory physician, Teaching hospital Jaffna and consent from the recruited patients. Collected data was processed and analyzed with the help of SPSS 23.

Results: Total number of patients participated in this study was 97. The mean diagnostic delay was 23.47 ± 9.73 days. Diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis was delayed in 57 (58.8%) patients. Initial treatment seeking place and repeated visiting to a same health care level were found to be significantly associated with diagnostic delay. There was a significant relationship between socio-psychological characteristics and clinical and health related factors of patient with the delay in diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis. This could be due to the lack of health education on Tuberculosis in the society.

Conclusion: There should be an organized structure by the government at zonal levels and through schools for proper health education to general public and patients regarding the disease.