

# Training plan for a new DOTS-Plus treatment supporter

## Materials needed:

- *Tataiso ea Pheko ea Lefuba Metseng* (a copy for the DOTS-Plus treatment supporter to keep and one for the trainer)
- Pamphlet of MDR-TB treatment side effects
- One or two *Category 4 Treatment Cards* for different patients (actual patients' cards or prepared examples)
- A prepared example card with all general patient information and drug regimen filled in. (The treatment supporter will practise marking treatment on it.)

## Specific to the patient who will begin treatment:

- Copy of the patient's *Category 4 Treatment Card* (prepared for the TB treatment supporter)
- First month's supply of the patient's oral Category 4 drugs.
- Plastic box in which the patient will keep all oral Category 4 drugs (the patient will bring this back to the district hospital monthly).
- First month's supply of injectable medication, including syringes and needles and sterile water.
- Large plastic box in which the health centre will keep all injectable medication and related supplies (the treatment supporter will bring this back to the district hospital monthly).
- Exercise book for the treatment supporter to mark down the patient's morning and evening treatment regimen.

**Time required:** One hour or less

**General guidelines for training a DOTS-Plus treatment supporter:** Use relevant teaching methods listed below to teach important tasks and information. Be sure that the treatment supporter **practises** important tasks. Ask **checking questions** to be sure that the treatment supporter **remembers** important information.

- Give **information** about each task and how to do it.
- Give **examples**, such as showing the tablets or giving a demonstration.
- Have the learner **practise** the tasks, as you give guidance and feedback.
- Ask **checking questions** to assess what the learner remembers.

## Suggested steps of a training session:

### 1. Introduction

- Explain that you are going to teach some information about TB and MDR-TB and what do to as a DOTS-Plus treatment supporter.
- Give the treatment supporter a copy of *Tataiso ea Pheko ea Lefuba Metseng*. (Section numbers in the steps below refer to sections in this guide.)

### 2a. Review information about TB and its treatment by going through pages 1-6 in *Tataiso ea Pheko ea Lefuba Metseng* with the treatment supporter page by page.

- **Information:** Review the text with the treatment supporter. Discuss the text, answering any questions from the treatment supporter, commenting on the text and discussing how this differs (if it does) from what most people believe, etc.
- **Check understanding:** Ask some checking questions to review and see whether the treatment supporter recalls the most important points.

### 2b. Review information about MDR-TB and drug resistance

- **Information:** Review the following text with the treatment supporter. Discuss the text, answering any questions from the treatment supporter, commenting on the text and discussing how this differs (if it does) from what most people believe, etc.

- Drug-resistant TB:
  - Created when TB patients do not take anti-TB drugs regularly.
  - Can be transmitted to family and friends.
  - Can be easily transmitted to people living with HIV.
- Offer HIV testing if patient does not know serostatus.
- MDR-TB treatment lasts for at least 2 years.
- Second-line anti-TB drugs are weaker than first-line anti-TB drugs. Every single dose must be taken at the correct time of the day. If not, there is a good chance treatment may fail.
- There is no other treatment for MDR-TB.
- Second-line anti-TB drugs have many side effects, but these can be managed. The clinical team must communicate closely with the DOTS-Plus treatment supporter about side effects.
- The patient is most infectious during the first few months when he/she is still smear and culture positive. He/she should try to sleep apart from other family members during that time and use correct cough hygiene.

- **Check understanding:** Ask some checking questions to review and see whether the treatment supporter recalls the most important points.

### 3. Review the role and tasks of the DOTS-Plus treatment supporter.

- **Information:** Review the following. Give explanations as appropriate. Answer questions from the treatment supporter.

**DOTS-Plus treatment supporter**

- Supervise both doses (morning and evening), including injections at the health centre.
- Accompany patient to all medical consultations.
- Provide sputum bottle to patient on monthly basis for sputum collection.
- Record doses on MDR-TB treatment card.
- Take injectable drugs and supplies to health centre every month; return box to district hospital at end of month.

- **Check understanding:** Ask the treatment supporter some checking questions.

**4. Teach how to read the *Category 4 Treatment Card* to see what drugs to give the patient.**

- **Information:** On the patient's *Category 4 Treatment Card*, explain how to read the abbreviations for the drugs and the numbers of tablets to give the patient as one dose. On the first page, ask the treatment supporter to draw or write each drug in the patient's regimen, followed by the quantity. If there is any drug that requires anything special to take (e.g. PASER must be taken with an acidic liquid e.g. motoho), explain how this should be done.
- **Example:** Show the exact drugs that the patient should swallow in the morning, and then in the evening, under supervision of the treatment supporter.
- **Practice:** Ask the treatment supporter to explain the drugs taken by the patient in the morning, and then in the evening, looking at his/her exercise book. Then ask the treatment supporter to show you the correct tablets and capsules and injections to give each day. Listen and watch carefully. Praise what is correct and give help as needed.

**5. Teach how to give directly observed treatment.**

- **Information:** Review with the treatment supporter page 12 "Khaolo ea Boraro: Mokhoa oa ho noesa mokuli lithlare lapeng" from *Tataiso ea Pheko ea Lefuba Metseng*. Explain that it is most important to actually see the patient swallow the tablets. It is not acceptable to let the patient swallow tablets when you are not present, either for your or the patient's convenience.
- **Example:** Demonstrate how to give directly observed treatment. Pretend that the supporter is an MDR-TB patient. Then, greet the patient, take out the *Category 4 Treatment Card*, ask the patient to take out his/her box of drugs, ask the patient to swallow the tablets with a glass of water, make sure the patient takes PAS with motoho. (The treatment supporter should not swallow the tablets, however.)
- **Practice:** If the MDR-TB patient is present, have the treatment supporter supervise the first dose while you watch and provide guidance as needed. If the patient is not present, ask the treatment supporter to pretend that you are an MDR-TB patient and practise supervising you take either the morning or evening dose.

- **Check understanding:** Ask the treatment supporter, “Suppose the patient complained of an upset stomach and wanted to take his dose later after you leave. What would you do?” Discuss the best response. Ask the treatment supporter, “Suppose the patient says, ‘I already took my doses before you came.’ What would you do?” The best response will be” you must take all your treatment under my direct supervision”.

**6. Teach how to mark the *Category 4 Treatment Card* and the exercise book after giving directly observed treatment.**

- **Information:** Explain to the treatment supporter that the treatment card and the exercise book hold all information about the MDR-TB treatment. Every dose must be marked accurately on the card and in the exercise book, so they will show every dose the patient took or did not take. Remind the treatment supporter never to tick the card until and unless the patient is observed taking all drugs.
- **Example:** Show the treatment supporter how one or two actual patients’ cards have been marked, as examples. Explain what the ticks mean (right to left diagonal for the morning dose; left to right diagonal for the evening dose), how they are placed under the correct date, and other notations (such as “0” for missed appointments, and an arrow for self-administered therapy). Show the treatment supporter how to record doses in the exercise book—if the treatment supporter is illiterate, he/she can draw pictures of the pills.
- **Practice:** If the TB patient is present, have the treatment supporter mark the card and exercise book to indicate the dose just observed. If the patient is not present, give the treatment supporter a prepared example *Category 4 Treatment Card* and exercise book. Ask the supporter to pretend that the patient has just taken the treatment, and mark the card and exercise book on the correct date. Then describe, day by day, a few days of treatment observed or days missed and ask the treatment supporter to mark the *Category 4 Treatment Card* and exercise book. Check the ticks and drawings and help the treatment supporter if necessary. Continue until you feel the supporter can do it correctly.

**7. Teach about side-effects.**

- **Information:** Explain that the patient may complain of side effects. The supporter should also observe the patient’s appearance and ask whether the patient is experiencing any problems. Pass out the pamphlet of MDR-TB treatment side effects and review it.

**Severe side effects: Tell patient to stop taking ALL drugs, accompany the patient to the district hospital.**

- Patient's skin or eyes look yellow
- Red rash over large area of body with skin coming off

**Serious side effects: Continue Category 4 regimen. Accompany patient to the district hospital as soon as possible.**

- New depression, anxiety
- Hearing voices, seeing visions
- Delusions, confusion
- New rash

**Other side effects: Tell the clinician about these at the next monthly visit.**

- Difficulty hearing or constant ringing noise
- Tingling or burning of skin on feet
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

**Supportive care for nausea and vomiting**

- Stagger doses so patient does not have to take all drugs at once.
- Increase fluid intake. This is very important to prevent dehydration. Offer the drinks the sick person likes, such as water, juice or tea; ginger drinks can help. Take drinks slowly and more frequently.
- Take soft porridge before taking doses.

- **Practice:** Ask a series of questions to help the treatment supporter become familiar with the list of side-effects and what to do. For example, ask the following questions. The supporter should look at the list and say what should be done:
  - If the patient complains of vomiting, what would you do?
  - If the patient vomits his doses, what would you do?
  - If you notice the patient's skin or eyes looks yellow?
  - If the patient is very depressed and sad?
  - If the patient is very nervous and anxious?

Ask questions such as the above until you feel confident that the supporter will know what to do for the patient.

**8. Teach how to encourage the patient to continue coming for TB treatment.**

- **Information:** Explain that the DOTS-Plus treatment supporter can make a real difference to the patient. By listening to and encouraging the patient, you help to strengthen the patient's will to complete the whole TB treatment. It is important to praise and encourage the patient every day.
- **Examples:** Suggest some example things to say to TB patients to praise them and encourage them to continue the treatment.
  - "If you continue taking treatment, you will protect your family members and friends."
  - "The side effects will get better as your body gets used to the drugs."
  -
- **Practice:** Ask the treatment supporter to practise saying some encouraging things to you. (This will help the supporter to remember them.)

**9. Teach what to do if a patient missed a dose.**

- **Information:** Tell the treatment supporter to take action when patient is more than 24 hours late for a dose. Explain what to do:
  - Visit the patient's home.
  - Find out what is causing the problem and discuss what to do to prevent missed doses in the future.

- Observe the patient taking his/her dose.
- If the patient cannot be found or cannot be convinced to continue treatment, contact the health facility for help without delay.
- **Check understanding:** Ask the supporter some checking questions about what to do when the patient misses a dose.

#### 10. Teach how to obtain a resupply of drugs.

- **Information:** Ask the treatment supporter to accompany the patient to the health facility each month for a resupply of drugs. Come a few days before the month's drugs are finished, so there will be no day when the supply is completely gone. Ask the supporter to bring the *Category 4 Treatment Card*. You will copy the ticks or other notes on the treatment supporter's card to the original card. You will also discuss any problems.
- **Check understanding:** Ask the supporter some checking questions, such as, "When will you return for the next month's drugs? What will you bring with you?"

#### 11. Teach what to do if the patient or the supporter must be away for a few days.

- **Information:** Explain that the treatment supporter may give the patient enough drugs for self-administration for a maximum of 1 week (only during the continuation phase when the patient is not receiving an injectable. Alternatively, the treatment supporter may refer the patient to the health facility to decide what is to be done. The treatment supporter and the patient may also ask someone else to help during this time.
- **Check understanding:** Ask the treatment supporter what to do if the patient or supporter must be away. (This is a good issue to discuss again after some experience, such as when the patient and treatment supporter comes for a resupply of drugs.)

#### 12. Teach when to accompany the patient back to the health facility for follow-up.

- **Information:** Explain that the treatment supporter should accompany the patient every month to the health facility for:
  - Check-ups with a clinician
  - For follow-up sputum examinations
  - Collect the next month supply of drugs
 If there are any laboratory tests needed on that visit, the clinician will tell the treatment supporter to make sure the patients goes to the lab for those tests. The treatment supporter should also make sure that the patient has sputum bottles and has collected sputum the day before the monthly follow-up.
- **Check understanding:** Ask the treatment supporter to tell you what needs to be done on each monthly visit to the health facility.

#### 13. Teach how to collect sputum.

- **Information:** Explain that the treatment supporter should remind the patient to produce two sputum samples before the monthly visit. The best sputum is in the early morning upon awakening. Ideally, one sample should be in the early morning one day before the monthly visit, and the other should be in the early morning of the day of the monthly visit. The treatment supporter should provide the sputum bottles to the patient, but should

not be in the same room when the patient coughs (to prevent infection). The treatment supporter should remind the patient to:

**The patient should:**

- Rinse mouth with water;
- Place both hands on the pelvis and either sit or squat;
- Inhale deeply 2–3 times;
- Open the container, bring it close to the mouth and bring the sputum out into it;
- Do not give saliva or nasal secretions; and
- Close the bottle.

- **Check understanding:** Ask the treatment supporter to tell you when and how he/she should remind the patient to collect sputum every month.

**14. Explain about infection control.**

- **Information:** Explain that window should be kept open in the patient's home to decrease risk of transmission to family members. The treatment supporter should put on an N95 mask as soon as entering the house. A month supply should be given to the treatment supporter, with an explanation that one mask can be used for at least a week. Explain that once the patient is sputum negative, you will tell the treatment supporter that a mask is no longer needed. Explain how to do a "fit check".
- **Check understanding:** Ask the treatment supporter to demonstrate a fit check.

**15. Conclusion.**

- Ask whether the treatment supporter has any questions about the tasks and how to do them.
- Ask the supporter to keep a copy of *Tataiso ea Pheko ea Lefuba Metseng* and the pamphlet of side effects safe, and refer to it as needed or for a reminder.
- Thank and encourage the DOTS-Plus treatment supporter.