The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Tuberculosis Treatment for Migrant Workers in Shanghai, China

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BACKGROUND

Tuberculosis is one of the world’s top infectious killers. It is a contagious, airborne disease caused by bacteria and most often affects the lungs. Though TB is curable and preventable, it still prevails, and according to WHO, about one-quarter of the world’s population has latent TB. About half of all people with TB can be found in 8 countries, while China is one of those.

Over the last 30 years, though TB incidence and mortality have significantly reduced in China, it still remains a main public health concern. At the end of 2019, the COVID-19 was reported and prevailed over the world. For controlling the COVID-19 effectively, governments transferred a great proportion of healthcare duties and facilities to COVID-19, which largely affects the health-seeking to other diseases, including TB. Under this unstable situation, the vulnerable population, including migrant workers, have a higher risk of exposure to both COVID and TB. Thus, the research question for this study will be how COVID-19 pandemic affects TB treatment for migrant workers in Shanghai.

OBJECTIVES

- To investigate the changes of TB treatment enrollment over the pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic periods (2018 - 2021) in China and examine patients' characteristics, particularly migrant status associated with TB treatment enrollment.
- To compare the delay of treatment initiation, the completion and success rates of TB treatment and financial burden between migrant workers and residents during the pandemic of COVID-19 in China.
- To investigate health system responses and constraints in TB control in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in China.
- To develop evidence-based recommendations adapted to the context to tackle TB healthcare challenges the vulnerable face, improving TB health equality in China and beyond.

METHODOLOGY

Selection

Shanghai is selected because it hosts a large number of migrant workers and are willing to join the study.

Literature Review (Potentially Systematic Review)

Inclusion Criteria: Include: Type of Study; Research Object; Study Time Period; Exclude: High Income Country

Keywords & Query: ((internal migrant) OR (domestic migrant) OR (rural-to-urban migrant) OR (floating population)) AND (tuberculosis) AND ((delay) OR ((access) OR (treatment adherence) OR (treatment completion)) OR ((cost) OR (expenditure) OR (financial burden) OR (payment) OR (reimbursement)))

Quantitative Analysis

Three Main Parts
1. Extract TB Register
2. Extract TB Medical Records
3. Recruit residents and distribute questionnaire

Qualitative Analysis

Three Approaches
1. Key Informant Interviews
2. In-depth Interviews
3. Individual Interviews

The IRB has been Approved and strictly followed.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- Financial Burden
- Insufficient Health System
- Poor Quality of Care
- Lack of Knowledge

Solely Focus on Migrant Workers, the Hindered Factors for TB Health Seeking
Comparing the Migrants and Residents, Main Differences Embodied In

REFERENCE