In house Hepatitis B, C and HIV education, testing and treatment center for prison inmates in a District Jail of Northern India: a demonstration project by a tertiary care center

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BACKGROUND AND AIM

* Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV (Human immunodeficiency virus) infections are major health concern among prisoners.
* It proposes a regular routine care pathway for assessment, screening, diagnosis, and treatment to be established in all prisons, integrated within managed clinical networks and national programs.

METHODS

A pharmacist led clinic within a district jail of adult prisoners is established, offering health education on hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV infections and prevention, along with advice on harm reduction, testing and availability of free treatment under national programs [National Viral Hepatitis Control Program (NVHCP) and National AIDS control program (NACP)]. Infected prisoners were offered access to a care pathway leading to treatment.

RESULTS

* Regular health education, screening, testing clinics are organized and linkage to care is done for the adult prisoners in collaboration with Jail Authority and NVHCP. On the occasion of world hepatitis day 2022 & 2023 screening was done.
* Health education sessions are organized. A total of 1265 prisoners (Mean age 35±8 years, 1200 males, 65 females) are screened using HBsAg, Anti-HCV and HIV rapid diagnostic kits and reflex testing is done if detected positive.
* Positivity rate is over 2% for Hepatitis C and HIV, 0.8% for hepatitis B. 100% reflex testing is done.
* All patients tested positive for Hepatitis B&C and HIV chronic infections are put on treatment by linking to District Treatment Unit NVHCP and ART center of NACP, respectively.
* Almost 20 percent of prisoners are staying for shorter durations (1-3 weeks), so a fortnight clinic is very useful for maximum coverage.

CONCLUSIONS

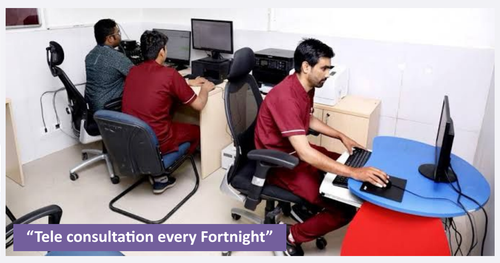
* An in-house education, testing and treatment clinic is an effective approach to increase testing uptake and linkage to care among prisoners.
* It's an apt example of WHO's recommendation of decentralization (within the jail), task sharing (pharmacist led clinic) and Integration (with national programs) approach

REFERENCE

* Bhadoria AS, Gawande KB, Kedarisetty CK, Rewari BB, Pathak VK, Pandey P, Gupta R. Prevalence of Hepatitis B and C Among Prison Inmates in India: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. Cureus. 2021 Nov 17;13(11):e19672.

" Meeting with Senior Superintendent, Haridwar Jail"

"Proposed use of Drone for reflex testing and delivering Drugs"


"Tele consultation every Fortnight"

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