

Quelapio, MID, Belen, V, Lagahid, J, Medina, A, Dimatatac, E and Tupasi, TE, "What happens to DOTS treatment failures if DOTS-Plus is not available?," *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, Vol. 9, No. 11, (November) 2005, Supplement 1: S260.

Background: DOTS in the Philippines started in 1996 and has attained nationwide coverage. The DOTS-Plus pilot project at Makati has a limited cohort. To inform policy, it is important to describe what happens to DOTS failures if DOTS-Plus is unavailable.

Objective and Methods: TB Registers from 2000-2001 of public DOTS centers in three Metro Manila cities, selected purposively based on population size and good DOTS program performance, were reviewed to identify DOTS failures. Utilizing a structured questionnaire, DOTS failures and/or their families were interviewed regarding patients' health-seeking behavior, drugs taken after failure, and current health status.

Results: Of 46, 41 (89%) DOTS failures and/or families were interviewed: 3 (7.3%) took no action; 1 (2.4%) self-medicated, all of whom have remained symptomatic; and 37 (90.2%) consulted physicians. Among the latter, 29 (78%) continued to take first-line anti-TB drugs, with 6 (21%) adding an over-the-counter fluoroquinolone. Status during study were 11 (30%) death, 22 (59%) with persisting symptoms, 3 (8%) without symptoms, and 1 (3%) without data.

Conclusion: DOTS-Plus is essential as DOTS treatment failures die or continue to have chronic disease and are infectious. Majority continue inadequate treatment including first line drugs and a fluoroquinolone prescribed by physicians.