

Improving tuberculosis notifications: A case of quality improvement initiative in Chasefu District, Zambia

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Introduction

Tuberculosis continues to be a public health threat in our country and globally. Chasefu District had a very low TB Notification rate of 19% in 2022, which meant that many cases were not detected early, leading to delayed treatment and continued community transmission. To avert this plight, the district undertook a quality improvement project, to identify better strategies to improve the TB notification rate in the district.

Methods

A quantitative design was selected for this QI initiative involving all the nineteen health facilities in Chasefu District. Data was routinely collected from program registers from September 2023 to July 2024.

Results

The number of TB case notifications per quarter from all facilities was collected using structured forms and entered into Excel for analysis. The data was analysed using Excel and presented as TB case notifications per 100,000 people. Since the project's initiation, the TB notifications have increased from

19% at the start of the project in Sept 2023 to 60% by week 31, 2024. After initiation of the project in quarter 4, 2023, the coverage has improved as follows; by end of quarter 4, 2023, we standing at 11/57 (19%), by end of quarter 1, 2024, we improved to 18/57 (32%), by the end of quarter 2, 2024, we have improved to 33/57 (58%) and by week 31 in this August we have improved to 34/57 (60%).

Conclusion

This QI initiative demonstrates that adopting scientifically proven initiatives can greatly improve TB notifications as evidenced by the results of this project. However, the project had limitations, mainly no x-ray for TB diagnosis, inadequate TB treatment supporters, inconsistent availability of fuel, and few facility staff oriented in TB management. Chasefu District's experience with implementing QI interventions could serve as a model for improving TB case notifications in other settings.