

Quelapio, MID, Auer, C, Orillaza, R, Mira, N, Belen, V, Egos, G and Tupasi, TE, "Mainstreaming DOTS-Plus to DOTS: when is culture indicated in DOTS?," *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, Vol. 9, No. 11, (November) 2005, Supplement 1: S291.

Background: Mainstreaming of DOTS-Plus to DOTS is planned in the DOTS-Plus pilot project in the Philippines.

Objective and Method: Treatment outcome and DST of smears positive patients whose sputum failed to convert to negative (non-converters) at month two three of treatment were analyzed to determine whether this non-conversion could be an early predictor for failure or MDR TB. A retrospective review of the 1999-2003 TB Registers were done.

Results: There were 36 (20%) non-converters among 181 new cases and 22 (10%) of 226 previously treated patients. Treatment success was noted in 32 (88.9%) of the former, failure 1 (2.8%), death 1 (2.8%), default 1 (2.8%), and 1 (2.8%) MDR TB and shifted to DOTS Plus before month 5. Four (18%) of 22 previously treated were treatment success, 4 (18%) failure, 1 (5%) transfer out, 2 (9%) default (one was MDR TB), and 11 (50%) MDR TB and shifted to DOTS Plus. All treatment failures were MDR TB.

Conclusion: Smear no-conversion to negative after 3 months treatment was an early predictor of failure and/or MDR TB in previously treated patients. Sputum culture could be done in these patients for early mainstreaming of DOTS-Plus into DOTS. A larger cohort is needed to validate the programmatic implication of this finding.