South Africa - “I’M SUFFERING FOR FOOD”: FOOD INSECURITY AND ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR TB PATIENTS AND THEIR HOUSEHOLDS IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

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Overview

Identification

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FOODINSECURITYANDACCESSTOSOCIALPROTECTIONFORTBPATIENTS

Overview

ABSTRACT
Background

Tuberculosis (TB) is a major health concern and the number one cause of death in South Africa. Social protection programmes can strengthen the resilience of TB patients, their families and households. This study aimed to get a better understanding of the role of social protection and other forms of support in relation to the burden of TB on patients and their households in South Africa.

Methods

This is a cross-sectional exploratory qualitative study using a phenomenological approach to focus on the lived experiences and perceptions of TB patients and healthcare workers. We interviewed 16 patients and six healthcare workers and analysed data thematically.

Results

The challenges faced by participants were closely related to household challenges. Participants reported a heavy physical burden, aggravated by a lack of nutritious food and that households could not provide the food they needed. Some needed to resort to charity. At the same time, households were significantly affected by the burden of caring for the patient - and remained the main source of financial, emotional and physical support. Participants reported challenges and costs associated with the

application process and high levels of discretion by the assessing doctor allowing doctors' opinions and beliefs to influence their assessment.

Conclusion

Access to adequate nutritious food was a key issue for many patients and this need strained already stretched households and budgets. Few participants reported obtaining state social protection support during their illness, but many reported challenges and high costs of trying to access it. Further research should be conducted on support mechanisms and interventions for TB patients, but also their households, including food support, social protection and contact tracing. In deciding eligibility for

grants, the situation of the household should be considered in addition to the individual patient.

Producers and Sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR(S)

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Sampling

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Questionnaires

No content available

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