

Stop TB Italia

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Overview of the progress in TB control activities

Italy is a low incidence country. TB control activities are decentralized on a Regional Level.

- Objectives

The 3 main objectives to improve TB control activities are:

- to ensure coordination of TB control activities (establishment of ICC mechanism)
- to implement evaluation of treatment outcomes
- to implement DRS

- Achievements

1) Minister of Health (MOH) established a National TB Commission, including the main stakeholders of TB control in Italy (Governmental Institutions- including Regions, Academy, Private Sector/Scientific Societies). Stop TB is represented by 2 members.
2) 3) Evaluation of treatment outcomes and Drug Resistance Survey is done based on a network of institutions covering from 30 to 50% of the cases notified every year nationwide. These data are reported to WHO since 1995. The proportion of cases covered by the surveillance system is gradually increasing, as some Regions are gradually adhering to it.

- Constraints

TB is a low priority in Italy. The National TB Commission is not funded by the Government (participants are covered by their own Institutions). Achievements 2) and 3) are irregularly funded as research projects. Participating Institutions are covering the gap. Coordination among the Regions is still sub-optimal.

Stop TB Italia had been created to further stimulate TB control both on a national and on an international level.

Please give us a brief description of your National Coordination Activities

- Aims and purposes

The National TB Commission is composed of 10 members nominated by MOH. Experts on a specific issue can be invited to attend meetings if necessary. The Commission's TOR are to support MOH in defining priorities for TB control and producing/updating guidelines

- Results up to date

National Guidelines for TB control (1998) and the Guidelines for TB Laboratories (2003) were produced. Presently the commission is preparing a survey on TB control in prisons and an evaluation on how TLTI is applied in the country.

- Constraints

As mentioned above, lack of funding and voluntary-related activities of the Commission's members are delaying the planned activities. TB is not felt in Italy as a burning priority.

What are the best practices of your National Coordination Activities up till now?

See above. Stop TB Italia was established. Also recently it initiated a fund-raising programme aimed at ensuring the establishment of a core team of professionals, in order to ensure efficient coordination with the Commission and other partners.

Current technical and financial partners that support the DOTS implementation and expansion in Italy

TB Technical Partners	Financial/Donors Partners	Others	Areas of work
Centres of Excellence, Scientific Institutions, SRL, NRL	Initial contacts had been established with different stakeholders of the private sector (industry, association of veterans, etc)		Centres of Excellence, Scientific Institutions (TB control) SRL, NRL (laboratory activities)

What are the current activities for Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization?

The TB day is not felt as a relevant topic in Italy. In the last 2 years an event had been created, attracting media and administrators (Milan, 2004, Rome 2005). The Governmental Conference on TB control in immigrants will be used in the country to sensitize media and mobiles resources for Global TB Control

Other relevant information

Stop TB Italia is organizing, together with the Italian MOH and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, WHO and the Partnership an International Governmental Conference on TB control in immigrants, involving the countries bordering the Mediterranean Basin and high burden countries. The Conference is tentatively planned in November 2005.