

Xpert MTB/RIF: Patient/Community Perspective



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Outline of Our Presentation



- Background on TB Diagnosis
- Challenges to TB Diagnostics
- Patients Perspective on GeneXpert
- Implications of New Diagnostics
- Proposed Solutions
- Next Steps



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Background Information



- Each year across the world as many as 9.4 million people who become sick with tuberculosis fail to access timely, accurate diagnosis and effective treatment.
- Most of these people come from the poorest and most vulnerable parts of society. These invisible tuberculosis patients are suffering and sometimes dying needlessly.
- And our failure to find more people who have an infectious form of tuberculosis is thwarting efforts to reduce spread of the disease.
- ***Too many people with tuberculosis are not being reached with timely TB Diagnosis. A new initiative seeks to change that- GeneXpert***



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Background



- In order to reach universal access to quality-assured TB diagnostic services by 2015, the diagnostic challenges of TB, notably HIV-associated and drug-resistant TB must be of priority.
- HIV-associated TB and drug-resistant TB pose particular diagnostic challenges, given that sputum smear microscopy lacks sensitivity to detect many TB patients with HIV co-infection, and cannot distinguish drug-susceptible from drug-resistant TB.



Challenges to TB Diagnosis



- **The challenges include:**
 - complexity of identification of persons suspected of having TB particularly children and PLHIV;
 - lack of simple, accessible, sensitive and specific diagnostic tools;
 - lack of trained laboratory professionals;
 - Grossly inadequate diagnostic laboratory infrastructure and quality assurance.
- **Additionally, the lack of access to laboratory services and insufficient links between the laboratory and treatment services can be major weaknesses of National TB Programmes (NTPs).**



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Activists echo the need for better TB diagnostics



Quotes on GeneXpert from TB Advocates



- Is it true that GeneXpert can confirm TB within 2 hours- Patrick Maina
- This is the diagnostics tool that we have waited for all these years
- If we had geneXpert 3 years ago, maybe my brother would not have died – Naomi Chelimo
- How much will it cost and who will cover these costs – Grace Kariuki



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Patients Perspective on GeneXpert



- Provides a solution to past diagnostics delays
- Time around taken to deliver results is quiet impressive
- Robust and can be performed by low cost personnel
- Access to immediate diagnosis and treatment increases the credibility of health services



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Implications of GeneXpert



- Ability to rule out/confirm TB prior to ART Initiation
- Potential reduction in mortality during ART initiation
- The cost of diagnosis is 6 times what patients are paying for Chest Xray- 3 dollars way beyond the reach of many poor TB patients
- Current design of equipment targets peripheral settings
- Requires skilled/deployed personnel at the point of care
- Movement of specimen from one place to another may result in potential diagnostic delays, this may be worsened if patients are not able to get results on time
- Implications of Rx scale up for patients that are diagnosed



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Implications of GeneXpert



- Community perception of Genexpert- Public Health Hospitals
- Timeframe to ensure universal access to genexpert
- why is it silent on important target populations e.g. children
- Requires continuous power supply so what happens in poor resource settings
- Roll of Xpert in ruling out TB among PLHAs



Next Steps



- Demand creation of nationwide diagnosis and treatment of MDRTB
- Community literacy on new tools and inclusion in national budgets
- Engagement of TB advocates to impact on scale up, price reduction ,diagnosis and treatment



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