

Lilly MDR-TB Partnership Continues to Fight Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB)

The Results Have Been Presented to the Delegation of International Journalists during Their Visit to Russia

On October 19-22, 2009 the delegation of International journalists visited Russia. The visit was organized by the Lilly MDR-TB Partnership in order to familiarize journalists with the Partnership's activities and the measures taken by the Russian Federation to prevent further spread of MDR-TB. Representatives of the leading media and TV channels from Spain, Portugal, Poland, Switzerland, Belgium and other countries took part in that Media Study Tour.

On October 19, 2009, there was a roundtable where leading Russian and foreign TB doctors, Luigi Migliorini, Head of WHO Russia, representatives of Eli Lilly and members of the Lilly MDR-TB Partnership took an active part. Russian journalists also participated in the roundtable discussion.

According to V.V. Yerokhin, Director of the Central TB Research Institute under the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, in 2008 the share of MDR-TB among newly registered cases amounted to 23.4% compared to 10.5% in 1999. Among Russia's regions the highest TB prevalence rate is registered in the Far East (140 cases per 100 thousand people), Siberia (130 cases per 100 thousand people), and the Urals (100 instances per 100 thousand people).

The participants highly appraised the activities carried out by the Lilly MDR-TB Partnership in Russia. In 2008-2009, as part of the activities of the Partnership in Russia, 76 doctors and physicians from the civil sector, 60 nurses, 19 doctors of medical institutions of the penitentiary system, 124 hospital managers and 50 representatives of non-profit organizations were trained on MDR-TB treatment and prevention. 120 Russian journalists took part in seminars on the role of media in raising public awareness of socially significant diseases. The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership provided for equipment of 5 computer classrooms in children's TB hospitals and carried out educational activities. Eli Lilly has gratuitously transferred its technology for production of a second-line antibiotic to fight MDR-TB to ZAO "Biocom", a subsidiary of SIA International, which would improve the patients' access to high-quality medicines.

The Media Study Tour continued in Tomsk. The participants met with Viktor Kress, Governor of Tomsk Region, and Maxim Zayukov, Head of the Tomsk Region Department of Health. They also visited the Tomsk TB Dispensary and the Tomsk Region TB Hospital, and met with the representatives of the Tomsk Region Department of the Federal Penitentiary Service. Special interest of the journalists was kindled by the activities of social services provided by the dispensary, and the work of the Russian Red Cross volunteers and the personnel of the 'Sputnik' Program who carry out outreach work and deliver treatment to MDR-TB patients' homes.

Sergei Mishustin, Chief Doctor of the Tomsk Region TB Dispensary, said that the region had made considerable progress in TB and MDR-TB treatment in the course of implementation of international projects: "Since 2006 the TB incidence rate has decreased by 6% - from 107.8 cases per 100 thousand people in 2006 to 101.4 cases per 100 thousand people in 2008. Early detection and quality treatment of tuberculosis have provided for the progressive decrease of the TB-related mortality rate (1.8 times) - from 17.8 cases per 100 thousand people in 2004 to 9.4 cases per 100 thousand people in 2008. In the past 4 years the TB prevalence rate has reduced 1.3 times: from 205.2 cases per 100 thousand people in 2004 to 158.9 instances per 100 thousand people in 2008. Development of social services and focus on the patients' needs allowed to reduce the number of treatment interruption from 28.8% in 2004 to 8.7% in 2008."

Sergei Mishustin pointed out the key success factors in Tomsk Region: integrated high-quality TB service infrastructure with steadfast cooperation among civil and penitentiary sectors; adequate supply of first line and second line anti-tuberculosis medicines and drugs to fight side effects; and early detection of tuberculosis in other health care facilities.

When asked about a recipe for success in Tomsk Region, Dr. Mishustin said: "Our obsession. We strongly believe that it doesn't take gods to make pots."

NGO Partners in Health, which has been working in the region since 1999, took care of organization of the Media Study Tour in Tomsk.

Lilly MDR-TB Partnership at a Glance:

Lilly MDR-TB Partnership carries out activities in the following areas: provision of access to medicines, transfer of technology for production of two antibiotics for MDR-TB treatment, raising of public awareness of TB, promotion of research, social support, advocacy of the patients' interests, and elimination of TB-related stigma. The Company has contributed an equivalent of \$135 million in donations and by providing medications and technology to increase access to treatment and focus global resources on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of patients with MDR-TB.