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Title: How much knowledge is healthy? Results of a KAP survey of TB patients in Republic of Macedonia

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Body: Operations research study to explore knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) related to tuberculosis (TB) among new TB patients was conducted in Republic of Macedonia (RM), in the period April-December 2010. Cross-sectional study was conducted in the period April – June, 2010; TB patients were interviewed with a standardized questionnaire. 45% agreed that TB is a very serious illness and 48.7% think that TB is serious problem in RM. 50% have correctly identified the signs and symptoms of TB, although significantly smaller proportion correctly identified airborne transmission of TB (14.1%). A sizable proportion did not correctly identify ways to avoid transmission, i.e. just over 30% agreed that one can avoid TB by not shaking hands with someone who has TB and 20% said that one can avoid transmitting TB by covering the mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing. 78% believed that TB can be cured by any drug recommended by a pharmacist, and only two respondents reported having heard of drug resistant TB. Given the low number of respondents who correctly identified how TB is transmitted, the National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) should consider strategies to improve knowledge among people with TB, such as training on client-provider communication skills, new TB patients should receive a standard set of written materials regarding diagnosis, treatment, and infection control with key messages and broader communication campaign aimed at the general population to reinforce the key messages.