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Title: Tuberculosis in prisons in the Republic of Macedonia

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Body: Background: Prisoners are at high risk of developing tuberculosis (TB) that is causing morbidity and mortality. Aim of the study: to evaluate the TB incidence rate in the prisons in Macedonia and to show the characteristics of TB patients. Material and method: The data was obtained from the National TB Register. The total capacity in the prisons in Macedonia is 2600 inmates per year. From 2005 to 2012 year the number of patients diagnosed with TB was 41. Results: The incidence rate among general population in Macedonia was continuously declining from 32,5 in 2005 to 17,2 /100 000 in 2012, but the incidence among the prisoners was variable and higher than among general population as it follows: 384, 0, 76, 230, 307, 384 and 38/100 000 prisoners in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively. The majority of 41 TB patients were between the age of 15 and 34 (58,5%). 38 patients were male. The patients with pulmonary TB were 34 (85 %) and 22 of them (62,3%) were with bacteriological confirmation of the disease with culture. In overall, 34 (83%) were new cases and 7 (17%) were relapses. 15 (36,6%) of all patients were drug-users. Only one patient was diagnosed with MDR-TB. There were no cases with HIV infection. The treatment results for 41 TB patient were as given: 36 (87,8%) were treated successfully, 1 patient died, 3 interrupted the treatment and 1 was lost. Conclusion: The National TB Program has to make an effort and take measures in order to identify and solve the risk factors for developing TB in Macedonian prisons.