

Children's health is a top priority

A project on implementation of tuberculosis prevention activities among children and adolescents is ongoing in Atyrau Region of Kazakhstan

Representatives of educational institutions and journalists of the Atyrau Region, Kazakhstan are already well informed on tuberculosis, its symptoms and the importance of preventive measures, including the need for vaccination among children. Within the framework of the project on Implementation of Highly Effective Measures of Prevention and Treatment of Tuberculosis among Children and Adolescents in Atyrau, seminars and trainings were organized for educational institutions staff and media representatives.

In Atyrau, the incidence rates of tuberculosis among children (0-14 years old) and adolescents (15-17 years old) are significantly higher than the national average: among adolescents and children, the incidence of tuberculosis in 2017 is 1.5 times higher than the average around the country.



For this very reason, the project on Implementation of Highly Effective Measures of Prevention and Treatment of Tuberculosis among Children and Adolescents, the purpose of which is to improve the organization of activities on TB prevention among adolescents and children, is ongoing here, in Atyrau. The project is implemented by the international organization Project

HOPE – Kazakhstan within the framework of the Social Investment Program of Tengizchevroil LLP, in cooperation with the National Scientific Center of Phthisiopulmonology of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

“The high incidence of tuberculosis in this region may have several reasons. One of them is a low coverage of new-borns by the BCG vaccination, as parents refuse vaccination for personal reasons and religious beliefs.

In addition, low levels of alertness and awareness of kindergarten and school personnel, as well as of the parents, about the symptoms of tuberculosis lead to delayed treatment at the medical facilities. Therefore, the important components of the project include increasing the health and non-health personnel alertness to the symptoms of tuberculosis, as well as raising the public awareness about the necessity of tuberculosis prevention.



Media is also actively involved in the work”, explained Bakhtiyar Babamuradov, the Project HOPE Representative in Kazakhstan.

According to the test results, 85 teachers, lecturers and educators of preschool and educational institutions, who had participated in the seminar on Prevention of Tuberculosis among Children and Adolescents have demonstrated a 40% improvement of knowledge level (from 51% up to 92%).

Another three-day training on Media Coverage of Tuberculosis Prevention among Children and Adolescents was organized for journalists in Atyrau Region. The training addressed the issues of transmission routes, forms and symptoms of the disease, measures to be taken to protect oneself from tuberculosis, and the importance of undergoing a fluorography. Modern approaches to the prevention, detection and treatment of tuberculosis were presented to the participants. Within the training, participants visited the Children's Department of the Regional TB Dispensary, where they were familiarized with new methods of rapid diagnosis for tuberculosis and drug-resistant tuberculosis.

To solve the issues of cross-sectoral interaction involved in working with children and adolescents, their parents, departments and structures, international and non-governmental organizations, a Strategic Advisory Group, including local religious leaders, was created. Result of the Group’s work is development, discussion and approval of the Interdepartmental plan on prevention of tuberculosis among children and adolescents in Atyrau region.

“The project is progressing quite successfully, and there has been very good cooperation between all parties involved: the Project HOPE-Kazakhstan, the Tengizchevroil LLP, the National Scientific Center of Phthisiopulmonology, the Akimat of Atyrau Region, as well as the representatives of the healthcare and education sectors. We are sure that the project will bring its results and change the situation for the better”, said Sagadat Azhigaliev, the Deputy Head of the Department of internal policy of the Akimat of Atyrau Region.