



Project Report
Screening, Awareness
and Treatment for
Hepatitis (SATH) at
University of AJ&K
Muzaffarabad

Submitted to:
RAHMA Islamic Relief,
Pakistan



Submitted by
The Healthcare Solutions



Name of the project: Screening, Awareness and Treatment for Hepatitis (SATH)
at the University of AJ&K, Muzaffarabad

Duration of the project: 1st March 2016-30th May, 2016

Location of the project: Muzaffarabad, AJK

Executed by: the Healthcare Solutions

Department of Zoology, University of AJ&K, Muzaffarabad

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC),
University of AJ&K, Muzaffarabad

Hepatitis Society, the University of AJ&K, Muzaffarabad.

Sponsored by: RAHMA Islamic Relief, Pakistan

Submitted by: the Healthcare Solutions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The university of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Muzaffarabad and RAHMA Islamic Relief-Pakistan jointly launched a mega project on Screening Awareness & Treatment of Hepatitis (SATH) focusing on the life saving of more than one million people across the state. University of AJ&K in collaboration with RAHMA Islamic Relief-Pakistan and Department of Health Government of AJ&K started the SATH project in order to save the lives of more than one million people from deadly hepatitis B and C. SATH was focused on the hepatitis screening and dissemination of preventive awareness among all the students, teachers and employees of UAJK alongwith the free treatment of all those who are found infected with these deadly viruses. Through the Mass awareness component of the project the students of UAJK will disseminate the preventive awareness to more than one million people of peripheral communities thereby launching the first ever large scale community service project by a University.

Screening and treatment was aimed at testing of 7000 individuals of UAJ&K including students, Faculty Members and Administrative Staff for hepatitis B and C and to treat the positive cases of B and C. Underlying objective of screening was to save and sensitize the students and working staff about the life threatening diseases affecting millions of people in Pakistan. The third major objective of the project was to disseminate the preventive education regarding hepatitis B and C among the students of UAJK and spread this education through these students to one million people of their respective communities. The Project has also created the research opportunity for 2 doctorate, three M. Phil and 10 B.S/ M.Sc. students of the University of AJK and Women University Bagh AJK.

Under "SATH" Project, 7000 individuals of all the departments including faculty members and administrative staff of UAJK have been screened. The screening component of the project was funded by the courtesy of Rahma Islamic Relief. Every department of the university has been individually screened by organizing the screening camps in the departments on specified days already notified through the chairmen offices of the respective departments.

Department-wise awareness sessions were arranged on the screening days in all departments in which the students were educated regarding the spread and prevention of Hepatitis B and C through awareness lectures delivered by the focal person of SATH Dr. Abdul Rauf and his research students along with the

distribution of awareness literature among the students, faculty members and administrative staff. To disseminate the preventive education to masses all students of UAJK have been conferred an assignment to impart and disseminate awareness information about Hepatitis in the society in summer break on the directions of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Khawaja Farooq Ahmed that will be mandatory for award of their final result. Through this we would be able to reach and impart hepatitis awareness to one million individuals of AJK.

Screening has been completed and out of 7000 screened individuals, 180 have appeared positive in the screening indicating an alarming situation of hepatitis B and C. The treatment of these positive individuals will be started as soon as their complete diagnostics are done by the cooperation of the Department of Health, GoAJK.

The project has immediately been able to save the lives of 180 individuals of UAJK who have been reported positive for Hepatitis "B" or "C". In the long run it will be able to save one million lives as preventive education and awareness is an effective and meaningful measure to curb this fatal disease.

The disease in 180 individuals of the university reveals an alarming situation of disease in country as university students represent an educated and privileged sect of society. There is a dire need of some bold steps by the concerned authorities towards this issue in order to eradicate this disease otherwise, situation will be more grave.

INTRODUCTION

Hepatitis remains an uncontrolled disease in Pakistan. It is affecting millions of people in all social strata; majority falls in the lower socio-economic category. One out of every 10 Pakistanis suffers from either Hepatitis B or C. Although millions of Pakistanis are infected with the deadly Hepatitis virus yet no concerned public department or agency has accurate statistical information about the affectees. Government and Health professionals are making conflicting statistics on Hepatitis B prevalence in the country, which vary from 4.8 to 5.8 percent¹.

According to WHO estimates, approximately 10 million people are suffering from hepatitis in Pakistan. Out of five types of hepatitis namely A, B, C, D and E, hepatitis B and C have the highest mortality; approximately 4-5 million people are suffering from Hepatitis B and about 4-6 million suffer from Hepatitis C. Unsafe drinking water, un-screened blood transfusions and un-sterilized/used syringes and shaving razors have made Hepatitis one of Pakistan's greatest health concerns. Hepatitis A and E are caused by oral infection, contaminated water and unhygienic food. Hepatitis B, C and D are caused by un-sterilized syringes, contaminated shaving razors, sexual intercourse, blood transfusion, and from mothers to infants.

Hepatitis B and C are global health problems. There are 350 million Hepatitis B carriers worldwide, and going by the figure of 5.8 percent prevalence rate, there may be around 8 million Hepatitis B patients in Pakistan. Medical experts associate the fast increase in Hepatitis cases to ignorance and a lack of appropriate preventive measures. Because of the lack of health resources, especially in rural areas, and deficiency of well trained medical personnel, the prevalence is increasing at an alarming rate. It is required to prevent this disease by health education and creating awareness among the general public.

RATIONALE

¹ http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_29-8-2005_pg7_40

In some studies it has been revealed that hepatitis B and C are spreading at an alarming rate in different apparently healthy populations of Pakistan². Very recently a village Prim Kot in district Muzaffarabad Azad Kashmir has been identified where more than 25% of the village population is suspected to be infected by hepatitis B and (or) C.

It is an established fact that hepatitis B, C and HIV are ' Silent Killers', and these viruses may remain silent for a long period and during this phase a person carrying any of these viruses is very dangerous for spreading to other around him. In this scenario it becomes very necessary to screen the apparently healthy population for the presence of these viruses and thereby saving the lives of those who have acquired the virus by in-time diagnosis and treatment. Furthermore by adopting preventive measures, spread of disease among others also needs to be restricted.

PURPOSE

The main objective of the project is to train the students community of AJK University, Muzaffarabad regarding their role in the prevention of the deadly hepatitis and to screen the students population for Hepatitis B/C to save the lives of those who are suffering from hepatitis. In addition to the screening it was very necessary to educate the people regarding the mode of transmission of these deadly viruses, so that those who are not affected by these viruses could live a safe and healthy life. This project focused to educate the student community regarding manifestations of the life-threatening hepatitis B and C, and their mode of acquisition and transmission, through behaviour change among them.

The specific objectives envisaged under this Project encompassed:

- Training and educating the students of AJK University Muzaffarabad about their potential role in the control of the deadly disease by educating them on the preventive aspect of the disease.
- Sensitization through screening of hepatitis B, C and HIV prevalence in the total students' population of AJK University Muzaffarabad.
- Diagnosis of those who appear positive in initial screening.
- Treatment of all those subjects who are found to be patients of hepatitis B and/or C after complete diagnosis.

² Rauf A, Nadeem M, Ali A, Iqbal M, Mustafa M, Latif M, Latif M, Ahmed N, Shakoori AR. Prevalence of Hepatitis B and C in internally displaced persons (IDPs) of war against terrorism in Swat, Pakistan. Eur. J. Public Health, July 2010.

- Finding out of the causes of the disease proliferation in the particular area / group.
- Measures to stop the proliferation of the disease and raising preventive awareness among the masses at all levels.

PROJECTS ACTIVITIES

1. Training and education of students on their potential role in the control of the deadly disease by educating them on the preventive aspect of the disease. This was done by organizing awareness seminars at department level.
2. Screening of total student population for hepatitis B and C prevalence. This was done by organizing screening camps during the workshop at departments.
3. Treatment of the infected individuals will be done using the facilities which have been extended by Government of AJK towards this project.

The project will communicate two key messages:

- Prevention: 'Get Protected' – Knowing the risk factors for hepatitis B and C is the most important step in preventing new infections.
- Diagnosis: 'Get Tested' - Liver disease is long and complicated. Getting tested is quick and simple.
- Treatment: 'Get Treated' – In many cases, treatment for hepatitis B and C is effective.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

The University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir is located in Muzaffarabad City but students from all over the state, Northern Areas and all the four provinces of Pakistan are pursuing their education in this institution. By implementing this project in AJK University a country wide awareness and impact can be generated in a very economical and effective manner.

PROJET TEAM

Chief Patron (V.C UAJK)	Prof. Dr. Khawaja Farooq Ahmed
Director ORIC	Dr. Saeed Arif Shah
Patron	Dr. Nuzhat Shafi (Chairperson Zoology)
Focal Person	Dr. Abdul Rauf Janjua (Zoology)
Team Members (Faculty)	Dr. Khawaja Basharat Ahmed (Assistant Prof. Zoology), Dr. Nasra Ashraf (Assistant Prof. Zoology), Dr. Saiqa Andleeb (Assistant Prof. Zoology), Mr. Zahid Latif (Lecturer Zoology), Ms. Saba Khalid (Lecturer Zoology), Ms. Tasleem Akhtar (Lecturer Zoology), Ms. Sundus Khawaja (Lecturer Biotechnology)
Team Members (M.Phil Scholars)	Syed Ayaz Kazmi (Zoo), Mr. Naeem Latif (Zoo.), Mr. Jahanzb Khurshid (Zoo.), Ms. Samina Tahir Kyani (Zoo.), Mr. Ghulam Rasool (Zoo.), Mr. Abdul Hameed Malik (Zoo.), Khawaja Imran Tahir (Zoo.), Mr. Faisal Mehmood (Zoo.), Ms. Mehr- un- Nisa Awan (Zoo.), Ms. Sumayya Aziz (Zoo.), Ms. Samina Sarwar (Zoo.), Ms. Anbreen Sarwar (Zoo.), Ms. Sehrish Gul (Zoo.), Ms. Rabia Azad (Zoo.).
Team Members (M.Sc. Students)	Mr. Zaeem Ashraf Kiani, Mr. Faisal Farooq, Mr. Ayaz Ahmed Khan, Mr. Sakhawat Sadozai (Maths), Mr. Luqman Kabir, Mr. Waqas Ahmed, Mr. Haseeb Ahmed, Mr. Asim

Khan, Ms. Khuzaima Tufail, Mr. Ishrat Fatima,

Team Members (B.S. Students) Mr. Tauseef Abbasi (Zoo.), Mr. Zahid Murtaza (Zoo.), Mr. Mubashir Arif (Health Sciences), Mr. Haris Sharif (H.S), Mr. Abdul Sattar (H.S), Mr. Shafique Ch. (H.S), Mr. Abdullah Naeem (H.S), Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed (H.S),

OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

This was the pioneer project in the country by any university, which addressed the utmost need to control the dangerous hepatitis/AIDS, by involving the most important stake holder in the spread of disease. Moreover, it was an excellent example of a joint venture between a philanthropist organization (RIR) and a university to halt and ever increasing deadly disease in the society.

A total of about 7000 students, teachers and employees of the University of AJ&K were included in the project. During the awareness seminars they were educated regarding hepatitis as well as their role in combating this deadly disease. They were also taught the practices which could eliminate the transmission of those deadly diseases. The key outcomes of the project are:

- In-time diagnosis of the students and employees who are suffering from hepatitis B or C, which is helpful in saving their lives.
- Awareness about the control of different diseases among the employees and students of University of AJK.
- During the awareness session around 7000 students, teachers and employee of the university were given the preventive education on the deadly hepatitis which turned out to be a great benefit of the project.
- Government health department extended an extra ordinary support towards the project by allocating the funds for the treatment of all the suspects of the disease, which has made our project a completely comprehensive healthcare intervention.
- To disseminate the preventive education to masses all students of UAJK have been conferred an assignment to impart and disseminate awareness

information about Hepatitis in the society in summer break that will be mandatory for award of their final result. Through this we would be able to reach and impart hepatitis awareness to one million individuals of AJK.

- It was an excellent example of a joint venture between a philanthropist organization (RIR) and a university to halt an ever increasing deadly disease in the society.
- A sense of community service was inculcated among the university students at large turning them into responsible and active citizen in line with the University's mission.
- Research collaboration with AJK University has been developed which is mutually beneficial for both RIR and the University.

SATH through the Camera Lens





