

Achieving equity in action: Designing and implementing the ECHO virtual community of practice model to strengthen TB workforce capacity

Date: Thursday, 9 December 2021

Time: 14:00 to 17:00 CET

Registration link for course:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMtcu2vqj4jHt1AHuoMrmVyRnfeOpmE0U4I>

The ECHO Institute's mission is to democratize medical knowledge and help get best practice care to underserved people all over the world. The ECHO [Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes] telementoring model is an innovative evidence-based education and training intervention designed to strengthen the knowledge and practice of clinical and programmatic teams in underserved communities. The model supports development of virtual communities of practice and learning that link national and international experts with site level TB practitioners for workforce development and collaborative problem solving to improve quality of and access to care. The model is rapidly being adapted in a wide variety of global contexts for DR TB treatment capacity development, pediatric TB, LTBI, TB/HIV, TB/HCV, TB Data 4 Action, and as part of TB elimination strategies.

In this Post-Graduate Course we will introduce participants to the basic principles and components of the ECHO model and review examples of the adaptation of the model in a variety of TB epidemic contexts in both high and low burden settings, including among indigenous and marginalized communities.

Expected outputs/outcomes: Each participant will begin the process of designing their own TB ECHO program plan of action for their local context with guidance from the faculty using a standard work sheet as a template. Each participant will acquire an understanding of the principles and components of the ECHO model for education, training and workforce development, and the variety of ways it has been adapted to support national and sub-national TB programs, including DR TB programs in Asia, Africa and the Americas.

Session sponsor: Bruce Baird Struminger, MD, MA

Chairs: Diana Fortune (National Tuberculosis Controllers Associations); Neeta Singla National Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases [India]

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Coordinators: Bruce Struminger University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center; ECHO Institute; Amy Armistad (University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center/ECHO Institute)

Target audience:

Speakers:

Upasna Agarwal: *Nationwide Expansion of the Delhi MDR TB ECHO Program to Support TB Elimination & Capacity Building of HIV Clinicians to Treat TB with ECHO Support*

The National Institute of Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases (NITRD) MDR-TB ECHO Program develops the capacity of district TB medical officers by discussing complex MDRTB cases and sharing best practices for treatment. NITRD runs multiple unique TB ECHO programmes, including those for “Post Graduate teaching”, a “Difficult to treat TB Clinic” and a TB-HIV co-infection ECHO program in partnership with NACO. The Government of India formally incorporated ECHO into the National Guidelines for Programmatic Management of MDR TB setting it up for country-wide expansion. Thus far, seven other Indian states launched MDRTB ECHO programs.

Lilit Khachatryan: *A National ECHO program to strengthen DR-TB, complex TB, TB/HIV and TB/HCV care and treatment in the Republic of Armenia*

The Ministry of Health established a TB ECHO program in 2021 under the Global Fund Grant “Strengthening Control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Republic of Armenia”, to connect healthcare personnel nationwide with TB, HIV and Viral Hepatitis experts, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and sharing of experiences. ECHO program goals include increased DR-TB case detection, treatment completion, prevention of DR-TB infections, and an improved programmatic environment. ECHO sessions also focus on diagnosing and treating co-morbidities including HIV and viral hepatitis co-infection. We expect quality of care to improve, especially where travel and in-person training are cost and time prohibitive.

Jonathan Iralu: *US Indian Health Service TB and COVID Care during the COVID-19 pandemic*

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the routine care of other infectious diseases in 2020 including tuberculosis and HIV. The Navajo Area Indian Health Service maintained delivery of tuberculosis care during the pandemic through continuation of a monthly ECHO virtual community of practice to foster continuing education of providers and management of the care of individual tuberculosis patients. Simultaneously, the national Indian Health Service leveraged the ECHO platform effectively to rapidly educate and train its clinicians on diagnosis, treatment and prevention of COVID-19 at remote, rural, Indian Health Service and tribal health facilities across the United States.

Daria Szkwarko: *Advancing TB Prevention - Implementing the ECHO model to increase latent tuberculosis infection testing and treatment in primary care*

In 2016, the US recommendations were updated to support latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) testing and treatment in primary care. Primary care providers (PCPs) rarely receive sufficient LTBI training and feel uncomfortable prescribing treatment. In 2020, the Brown University ECHO hub designed a LTBI ECHO course modeled after a successful Massachusetts LTBI ECHO initiative. The course incorporated the same six virtual telementoring sessions for Rhode Island PCPs. A mixed-methods evaluation was

conducted. Pre- and post quantitative surveys and qualitative in-depth interviews with participants were used and demonstrated increased PCPs' confidence and practice change. The development of a Regional LTBI ECHO is underway.

Peter Daud: *The Contribution of Project ECHO in reducing the cost of treatment services for multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis patients in Tanzania*

In implementing the Programmatic Management of Drug Resistance Tuberculosis in Tanzania (PMDT) policy of decentralisation of DR-TB treatment initiation from a hospital to home based care approach, effective introduction of new DR-TB drugs e.g. bedaquiline, delamanid, pretomanide and shorter treatment regimens requires continuous capacity building among health care workers at all levels. Use of the ECHO vCOP telementoring approach has been a cost-effective, continuous, long term and sustainable programme for capacity building at all levels of the health system and has proved an effective strategy to help accomplish provision of quality PMDT services in Tanzania.

Chairs and Speakers' biographies



Chair: Neeta Singla works as Research officer at the National Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases (NITRD), New Delhi, India. She is a Medical graduate with Master's in Public health from National Centre for Disease control, Delhi, India. Dr. Singla has 25+ years of experience and has worked on several TB & DRTB research projects. Dr Singla heads the Department of Training and is In-charge of Programmatic Management of DRTB at NITRD. She is the Nodal Officer for eight ECHO programmes for TB, HIV, Community Volunteers, COVID-19 and Academics. She and her team mentor other institutes in starting ECHO programmes. docneetasingla@gmail.com



Co-Chair: Diana Fortune is the TB nurse consultant for the National TB Controllers Association (NTCA), whose mission is to bring together the leaders of TB programs in all U.S. states and territories. She was previously the TB Program Manager for the New Mexico Department of Health TB program for 10 years. Diana focused her nursing career on tuberculosis for the last 20+years. The NTCA Community of Practice for TB Program managers was initiated in 2019 based on the ECHO model. The first U.S. TB ECHO program began in 2015 during her time as New Mexico TB Program Manager.



Dr. Upasna Agarwal is an Internal Medicine physician at the National Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases, New Delhi, India. She has a PhD in analysis of clinical data and is actively involved in research projects on HIV-TB and new treatment modalities for TB. She supported the development of Government of India's national guidelines for management of TB-HIV and TB in women. She is a trainer on antiretrovirals, HIV/TB and research methodology and is the technical lead for e-NISCHIT

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(National Initiative to Strengthen Collaboration between HIV-TB through e-learning), the HIV-TB ECHO program for state run HIV clinics in India.



Lilit Khachatryan earned her Medical Doctor degree from Yerevan State Medical University (1991) and Master of Public Health degree from American University of Armenia School (2009). She practiced as an endocrinologist early in her career. She is currently the TB and HIV Grant Program Coordinator of the Global Fund Program Coordination Team at the Ministry of Health of Armenia. She oversees the performance of the National TB Control Program and National HIV/AIDS Response and the procurement and supply chain management of drugs and lab consumables. She has contributed to the USAID-funded HS-STAR project and World Bank-financed programs, among others.



Jonathan Iralu is the Indian Health Service Chief Clinical Consultant for Infectious Diseases. He has a special interest in HIV, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted disease care in rural communities. His research has focused on undifferentiated febrile illness in the American Southwest and on rural HIV care delivery. He has worked at Gallup Indian Medical Center since 1994 and is an instructor at Harvard Medical School and Senior Physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital Division of Global Health Equity. He represents the Indian Health Service as an ex-officio member of the CDC's Advisory Council for the Elimination of Tuberculosis.



Daria Szkwarko is an Assistant Professor in Family Medicine at the Warren Alpert School of Medicine at Brown University and Adjunct Assistant Professor in Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Massachusetts. Her research interests are in TB prevention globally. In the US, she is interested in improving latent TB infection testing and treatment in primary care and is the Course Director for the Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Regional Latent TB Infection ECHO courses. Globally, she is interested in studying strategies that can improve child contact and presumptive TB management care cascades.



Peter Dunstan Daud is a Registered Medical Doctor and a Clinical Research Doctor with experience in treating Multi-drug Resistant tuberculosis and Extensive Drug Resistance tuberculosis at the Centre of Excellence Kibong'oto Infectious Disease Hospital Siha, Kilimanjaro; he is also a Clinical Trial Doctor and sub-Principle Investigator for several ongoing clinical trials. He has participated in developing several national tuberculosis guidelines in Tanzania. He currently

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serves as the National Coordinator for the Tanzania Tuberculosis ECHO as well as serves as a trainer for Tuberculosis care and treatment in Tanzania.