**Innovative approach to improve presumptive referral**

1. **Presumptive TB Case identification at Chemist / Druggist retailer outlets:**
* **Objective:** Identification of hidden TB cases who are avoiding attending hospitals/doctors’ chambers over the years especially during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 & 2021.
* **Background:** OTC (Over the counter) drug purchase and receiving informal advice from the staff engaged in chemist shops / retailers for the common ailments including respiratory tract infection is widely practiced by sizable percentage of people across the community.
* **District recent innovation:** The North 24 Parganas district under special endeavour in NTEP, undertook phasic motivational orientation of workers of the chemist shops to refer such symptomatic patients of respiratory tract infection to nearest public TB Diagnostic Centres with an aim to get TB cases out of those attendees who prefer to by-pass any registered medical practitioner’s advice due to various reasons. This programmatic effort from the district end aids in identification of presumptive cases at the earliest for prompt diagnosis.

The druggist retailers as of now, share the details of the patients buying Anti TB Drugs from the respective shops, to the NTEP Programme Management Section for notification as per prevailing guideline.

But in our district they, in addition to above cited activity, are also role playing as significant informant for probable TB cases.

To document the presumptive cases referred from Chemist shops, we have innovated a referral breakup format that is collected from all TUs every month which included the following table.

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| **Private Chemist/Druggist** |
| Number of Medicine shop met in the month | No referred for sputum examination | Found total no of TB pts. (Pulmonary & EP) As per algorithm |
|  |  |  |

Furthermore, the referred subset of people can also identify the clinically vulnerable groups for TB like Diabetics, Malignancies who are used to purchase such comorbidity medicines for long from the respective counters.

* **Result**: In October 2021, 17 cases were referred from Chemist shops out of which, 3 smear positive cases have been detected. Yield has set in to generate – expectedly to get fruitful and significant outcome in recent future- may be more enhanced if they can be accorded with the Informant Incentive like ASHA/NQPP/HHW, subjected to the approval from State appropriate authority.

 