

## Letters to the Editor

### EXPERIENCE OF MULTIDRUG THERAPY BLISTER-CALENDAR PACKS IN AN URBAN LEPROSY CONTROL PROGRAMME IN BOMBAY

Sir,

Blister-calendar Packs (BCP) have been used as an alternative method of dispensing multidrug therapy (MDT) in a DANIDA assisted National Leprosy Eradication Programme in a few districts in India since 1987. The preliminary observations made so far are in favour of using the packs in leprosy programmes.<sup>1,2</sup> To make further observations in a metropolitan city leprosy programme, blister-calendar packs were used in the Bombay Leprosy Project on a small scale and the following observations were made.

A total of 235 leprosy patients (MB, 54; PB, 181) were considered separately for studying the compliance of the intake of self-administered doses of MDT. Fifty patients who were previously under MDT with loose capsules and whose urine test results for dapsone were available were taken as a control (group A). Subsequently, the same group was given BCP MDT treatment (group B). Additionally 185 new patients were also given BCP MDT treatment (group C). Urine samples were collected during the mid-period of two pulse doses by paying surprise home visits. For 3 consecutive months urine was tested qualitatively for dapsone. The urine test results of 50 patients from group B were compared with their earlier results during loose capsule treatment (group A). The compliance rate ranged between 78 and 96% in group B which was the same as when they had received loose capsule treatment. In group C the compliance rate ranged between 70 and 96%. This indicated that MDT delivery through BCP did not influence the intake of self-administered doses.

However, other operational advantages like ease of drug accounting, storage and dispensing were confirmed by the administrators. The patients also confirmed that BCP were easier to look after at home and more convenient to carry while travelling. The last tablet reminded patients about clinic day.

While considering the application of BCPs, operational advantages of this alternative delivery should be given more consideration than the increase in patients' compliance for self-administered doses.

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### References

- <sup>1</sup> Revankar CR, Sorensen BH. Blister-calendar packs for the treatment of patients in leprosy control programmes with multiple drug therapy (MDT). Letters to the Editor, *Lepr Rev*, 1988; **59**: 84.
- <sup>2</sup> Revankar CR, Sorensen BH, Kielstrup RW, Multicentre Study Group. Delivery of MDT through blister-calendar packs in leprosy eradication programme—multicentre field study (Phase I). *Lepr Rev*, 1989; **60**: 135–8.