

## **AN ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 'CONTRACT LEPROSY WORKERS' IN A NATIONAL LEPROSY ERADICATION PROGRAMME**

Sir,

To hasten multidrug therapy (MDT) coverage in 66 endemic districts with inadequate manpower in Northern India, the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) authorities launched a novel scheme involving a category called 'contract leprosy workers', who were offered task-oriented training in leprosy to identify cases and deliver MDT.<sup>1</sup> The initial observations made after 4 to 5 days of task-oriented training to these untrained leprosy workers were reported earlier.<sup>2,3</sup>

To assess the performance of such minimally-trained leprosy workers with simple training methodology, Unnao MDT district in Uttar Pradesh was adopted by the Bombay Leprosy Project under the NLEP/WHO district consultancy services to MDT districts.

Forty contract leprosy workers were managing 40 sectors covering a population of approximately 120,000. Over a period of 18 months (1994–1995), these workers found 4770 suspected leprosy cases through house-to-house surveys. Of these 3138 (66%) were confirmed as leprosy cases (MB : 806; PB : 2332). They were also involved in delivering MDT.

These findings indicate that 4-to 5-days task-oriented training for this category of workers is quite adequate in intensifying leprosy elimination activities, and thereby strengthening the existing programme.

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## References

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- <sup>2</sup> Revankar CR, Pai VV, Naik SS, Acharekar MY & Ganapati R. Task oriented short term training to contract leprosy workers in a National Leprosy Eradication Programme. Letter to the Editor, *Lepr Rev*, 1995; **66**: 78–79.
- <sup>3</sup> Pai VV, Niak SS, Revankar CR, Ganapati R. Task oriented training to contract leprosy workers in Arunachal Pradesh. *BLP Wall Journal* 1995; **5**.