June 30th, 2014

## Taima TB- Iqaluit Research Project Results

A lay summary of the paper "Taima TB: The impact of a multifaceted TB awareness and door to door campaign in residential areas of high risk for TB in Iqaluit, Nunavut" to be published in the journal PLOS ONE" in July, 2014

Taima TB-Iqaluit was a research project about tuberculosis (TB) in Nunavut that happened in Iqaluit from January 2011 to September 2013. The main purpose of the project was to find different ways to stop TB by answering these questions:

## How can we help community members hear about TB in their community? If they hear more about TB, will more people decide to get tested?

The first phase of the project was an education campaign to raise awareness about TB in the community. It happened between January 2011 and May 2012. TB education messages were developed in English and Inuktitut by community members, doctors, and nurses. There was a competition calling for people from the community to make videos to teach about these messages. The six videos submitted were shown at a community feast. There were several media events to raise awareness about TB in the community including a press conference, and radio and TV interviews. During this phase of the project, the number of people who decided to go to Public Health for testing without being called in doubled from an average of 25 people per month to 50 people per month. Unfortunately, once this education campaign was over the number of people going for testing went back down to normal. This shows that there is a need for regular education campaigns.

## Can we find more people who have TB if a nurse and community member visit people at home?

Finding 'sleeping' TB is important so that it can be stopped with treatment before turning to active TB disease which can make people sick. The second phase of the project was a door to door campaign teaching about and testing for TB. It happened between May 2011 and November 2011. A nurse and an Inuktitut-speaking TB champion knocked on the doors of 614 homes in areas of town where there had been a high number of cases of TB in the past. Of the 389 homes where someone was home, 214 households agreed to be part of the project. In these homes, 422 people agreed to watch the TB teaching videos and to be tested for TB. About one third of these people (176) could not be tested because they had already been diagnosed with 'sleeping' or active TB in the past. Out of the 246 who did get tested, 42 people (18.8%) were diagnosed with new 'sleeping' TB infection. These cases were extra cases that were not found by usual screening practices. Eight cases of active TB disease were found through the project. This means that this type of door to door campaign in areas that are at high risk for TB could add to the great work that is already being done by Public Health to find even more cases of TB.

## Will more people finish all the pills they need to take for 'sleeping' TB if the pills are delivered to their home, school, or work?

In the third phase of the project, all of the people who were diagnosed with 'sleeping' TB in the second phase of the project were offered treatment. This phase happened from July 2011 to September 2013. Treatment for 'sleeping' TB is antibiotic medication that needs to be taken twice a week for 9 months under the supervision of a public health nurse or assistant. The people in the Taima TB project could choose to have their pills delivered twice a week to their home, work, or school. Of the people in the Taima TB project who were offered treatment, 61% decided to take it. Of these people who started treatment, 68% finished the full 9 months of treatment. Iqaluit Public Health continued to run their clinic treatment program as usual for their patients. Of the Public Health patients, 70% finished their treatment. Taima TB project contributed an increase of 33% in all patients who completed treatment within the community.