

5.16 Fallout from the War- Treating Multidrug Resistant TB among refugees in Ireland

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This year, we report a sharp increase in cases of multidrug resistant TB (MDRTB). A number of these cases have been reported in Ukrainian refugees. The incidence of TB in Ukraine is currently 67.6 per 100,000. Ukraine has the fourth-highest TB incidence in the WHO European Region and the fifth-highest number of confirmed cases of extensively drug-resistant TB in the world. 29% percent of cases of TB in Ukraine are MDR or XDRTB, 8,000 cases per annum(1). The UN report that 6.3 million people have fled Ukraine since the start of the invasion(2), thus about 4,300 patients who have TB are among those refugees. 26% of Ukrainian patients with TB are HIV co-infected(1). We present 4 cases of MDRTB in Ukrainian refugees who have been treated at the National TB Centre, St James's Hospital. Specifically, we present the diagnostic and treatment challenges in patients who are refugees and live in congregate settings. We note that working with Ukrainian doctors in the team has facilitated patient management and communication with TB centres in Ukraine. We discuss the challenges in screening of war refugees for TB, so that they may be diagnosed and treated earlier.

References

1. Operational considerations for the prevention and control of infectious diseases - Russia's aggression towards Ukraine. :18.
2. Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation [Internet]. [cited 2022 Aug 13]. Available from: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

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