

S4.3: Defaulter or not?

Allocate cases to "yes, a defaulter", "no-not-yet, but missed treatment" or "completed treatment"

Case 1:

Sam developed on his chest, back, arms and legs many skin lesions (more than five) and was diagnosed in March 2004 with leprosy. After three months, in June, his skin had become darker and he did not return till September when he had noticed that more problems occurred and he did not feel properly on the sole of this right foot. He was diagnosed with a reaction for which he was started on steroids, and MDT was resumed. In December however, he got a temporary job and moved out of the area for four months, after which he came back to his own town. When he was away he had not taken MDT.

"yes, defaulted"

(The patient should be booked as a defaulter because more than 6 doses MB-MDT were missed, while 12 doses should have been taken within 18 months. Because 6 doses were missed, the MDT cannot be completed anymore. The patient should be re-registered as an "other case" (return after default) and MB-MDT started from the beginning)

Case 2:

Maria is a mother of three children and for some time she had four hypo-pigmented skin lesions. Now she was pregnant of her fourth child and she developed a numb left hand with some loss of strength in her grip. This was the reason she came consultation. She was diagnosed with leprosy. She was started on PB-MDT. After four months her baby was born, and for 2 months she did not appear to collect her MDT as she went to the village of her mother for the delivery.

"not yet defaulted, but missed treatment"

(The patient cannot be booked as a defaulter, since only 2 months of MDT were missed and the 6 MDT doses can still be finished within the time frame of 9 months. MDT must be continued for another 2 months)

Case 3:

Adamu lives in a small village about 20 km away from the health centre. He was diagnosed with MB leprosy in a late stage when he already developed insensitive feet. He was started on MDT and because the insensitive feet only occurred 3 months ago he was also given a steroid treatment for a leprosy reaction. In the following dry season he came regularly to collect his MDT, and the result of the steroid treatment was encouraging because he had recovered some of his sensation in his feet. When 8 months later the rainy season arrived, it became impossible for Adamu to collect the MDT and he missed it 4 times. When he reported back, unfortunately the health centre had somehow run out of MDT blisterpacks and again he missed a dosis. The next visit he did receive MDT again and this continued for 2 months, after which he missed another appointment due to the funeral of his uncle.

"not yet defaulted, but missed treatment"

(The patient cannot be booked as a defaulter, but missed already 6 doses, and this is the maximum number of doses a MB patient can miss. As he did not finish his 12 MDT of MDT, care must be taken that he indeed will finish his treatment. In this case a home visit could help to complete the treatment. Another good policy would have been to provide the MDT for several months because of the access problems for the patient.)

Case 4:

Amina is a young woman who came to the health centre in company of her mother. She had 3 hypopigmented skin lesions with loss of sensation and was diagnosed with PB leprosy. No disabilities were detected at this stage. The mother was worried as the diagnosis of leprosy would definitely bring the family into trouble and it would be difficult for Amina to marry if anybody was to find out. MDT was started. After 2 months Amina presented with pain in her right elbow, and slight loss of sensation on the ulnar side of her palm. Her mother attributed this to taking the MDT and insisted on alternatives. Steroids treatment was started, but Amina did not come back for her next visit. Four months later her situation had deteriorated and she came back to ask for help.

"yes, defaulted"

(the patient clearly missed 4 doses, while the maximum number of MDT treatments that can be missed is only three. The patient should be booked as a defaulter)

Case 5:

Eduardo is a farmer who was diagnosed with PB leprosy two years ago, and he already had developed a drop foot. He had then taken MDT for four months after he had interrupted treatment one time for a period of two months due to a disagreement with the former doctor about the price of the treatment. According to the radio the treatment was for free, was the argument of Eduardo. After some payment he did continue the treatment for another 4 months. His brother had now drawn his attention to a new doctor in the health centre who could perhaps help him better than the former doctor. Eduardo asked the new doctor if he could get MDT to help him cure his drop foot.

"completed treatment"

(The patient took PB-MDT for in total 8 months, with an interruption of only 2 months, therefore the criterion of taking 6 doses within 9 months is fulfilled and the patient can be booked as "treatment completed")

Case 6:

Finy is a mentally retarded young woman, who is diagnosed with MB leprosy. She lives with her family in the middle of town. The parents couldn't believe that their daughter attracted leprosy, because this had never occurred in the family before. Her father, an old man, collects her MDT and so now and then Finy herself also visits the health centre for a check-up. After 9 months the father dies of an heart attack, Finy doesn't visit the clinic for four months, and nobody came to collect the MDT for her either. Then her mother appears in the clinic and announces that they will move to a small village where there is no health centre. She asks if the treatment of Finy is already finalised or that she still needs to continue. She is then given 3 doses of MDT with the instruction to take it daily

and to come back when that is finished or when there is any problem. After three months the mother comes back with Finy for a check-up. During this visit MDT is given.

“completed treatment”

(The patient had taken MB-MDT for in total 12 months, with an interruption of only 4 months, therefore the criterion of taking 12 doses within 18 months is fulfilled and the patient can be booked as “treatment completed”)