

Facilitator Instructions for Activity 5: Involuntary Isolation and Detention as Last-Resort Measures

Objective

To sensitise health care workers to the ethical concerns regarding involuntary isolation and detention of patients

Question

Is involuntary detention of patients ever acceptable? If so, under what conditions would it be acceptable?

Time Allotted

20 minutes

- 5 minutes for instructions
- 5 minutes for individual activity
- 10 minutes for plenary discussion

Materials Needed

- Flip chart and pens to record plenary discussion
- Activity 5: Involuntary Isolation and Detention as Last-Resort Measures Delegate Hand-out

Procedure for running activity

1. Provide delegate with hand-out called Activity 5: Involuntary Isolation and Detention as Last-Resort Measures Delegate Hand-out
2. Inform them that they have 5 minutes to fill in the answers in the Delegate Hand-out
3. Collect the completed Hand-outs
4. Spend a few minutes collating the responses. If you have a co-facilitator, ask him/her to collate and group the responses. These should be written up on a flipchart
5. Facilitate a plenary discussion based on the responses captured
6. Provide summary points from under Tips section

Setting the Scene

TB control programmes operate within a complex legal framework that balances the civil rights of individuals with society's need for protection.

A dialogue between medical and legal professionals is necessary to ensure any legal steps taken to address patient non-adherence, strike the appropriate balance with modern constitutional guarantees of privacy, liberty, and non-discrimination. These issues are the same whether a patient has drug-susceptible or drug-resistant TB.

For those few patients who, for whatever reasons, continue to pose a risk to the public despite all efforts to address their barriers to initiating and adhering to treatment, ethical and legal options are needed to ensure that these patients do not continue to put others in the community at risk.

Tip

Isolation or detention should never be implemented as a form of punishment. Patients who decline treatment and who pose a risk to others should be made aware in advance that their continued refusal may result in compulsory isolation or detention.

Reinforce that, with appropriate support, adherence to treatment is not usually a problem.