

Health to healthcare workers’’: A peer-driven strategy for TB screening and case finding among vulnerable healthcare workers in Gaza Province in Mozambique

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Health care workers (HCWs) in Mozambique face elevated risk for tuberculosis (TB), yet the burden among them is poorly understood; no screening guidelines exist, labour consultations implemented in each health facility are not equipped, and stigma and confidentiality are concerns reported by HCWs seeking care. With support from Expertise France, we launched Health to Healthcare Workers—a peer-led, facility-based screening program targeting HCWs in Gaza Province (Dec 2023–Dec 2024). Multidisciplinary TB control teams (clinician, nurse, lab technician) trained in occupational health visited facilities outside their home districts. Teams screened HCWs for TB using Xpert MTB/RIF or Xpert Ultra on collected sputum; lung flute induction was used as needed. Integrated screening also included HIV testing with counselling, blood pressure, blood glucose, and mental health indicators. Known HIV-positive individuals were not retested. Demographic and cascade of care data were collected, aggregated and sent to the National Health Information System by the TB Control Teams. Descriptive analysis was performed. Across 112 health facilities in 14 districts, 79% of the target HCWs were screened. Among those tested: 0.6% (12) were diagnosed with TB, 0.3% (6) were newly HIV-positive, 17% (382) had elevated blood pressure, and 7% (159) had Diabetes. All individuals with positive results were linked to care. A peer-delivered, integrated screening approach achieved high coverage and identified both communicable and non-communicable conditions among HCWs.

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Sheila has seven years of experience implementing public health interventions and providing clinical care at the provincial level, particularly within HIV and TB programmes. Driven by a passion for strengthening the skills of healthcare workers and for exploring novel diagnostic and therapeutic tools to address emerging drug resistance, she strives to reduce patient mortality and to bridge the gap between scientific evidence and public health policy.

She is co-author of the article “Decision-makers' perspectives on the implementation of COVID-19 self-testing in Mozambique” (Public Health Action, 2025) and “High burden of cryptococcal antigenemia and meningitis among patients presenting at an emergency department in Maputo, Mozambique” (PLoS One, 26 April 2021).