



International Conference:

Evidence in Global Disability and Health

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ABSTRACT

Title: The SARI Project: a randomised controlled trial of interventions to reduce stigma in Cirebon, Indonesia

Abstract text (limited to 300 words, should include background, methods, results and conclusions):

Background

Stigma is one of the important factors leading to social exclusion for people with disabilities. Persons affected by leprosy and their family members are often stigmatised and experience problems in social participation. However, stigma is rarely quantified and the effectiveness of interventions is often not evaluated. The SARI Project in Cirebon, Indonesia, aimed to test and evaluate three intervention strategies, peer counselling, socio-economic development (SED) and contact with affected persons, to reduce stigma against persons affected by leprosy.

Methods

This study used a controlled trial design in which pairs of the stigma reduction interventions were randomly allocated to sub-districts in Cirebon. The study sample comprised community members and persons affected by leprosy. Mixed methods were used to establish a baseline regarding stigma and related parameters, to monitor the implementation and assess the impact of the contact events. Among community members, attitudes and expected behaviour were measured using the EMIC stigma scale and Social Distance Scale (SDS). Among leprosy-affected persons, the SARI Stigma Scale assessed anticipated, experienced and internalised stigma.

Results

Two independent representative samples were drawn from community members in the study area. The baseline sample included 213 persons; the final survey 375 persons. A highly significant reduction in stigma scores was found in intervention areas where contact events were organised, while differences in other areas were not significant. The largest differences were found among those attending actual contact events. Among affected persons, 237 had complete records in both baseline and final surveys. Among them, stigma levels had also reduced significantly and restrictions in social participation decreased.

Conclusion

Contact with affected persons, peer counselling and SED are effective interventions to reduce social stigma in the community and its impact on persons affected by leprosy. The interventions can be easily adapted for use with people with other NTDs or disabilities.

Deadline for abstract submission: November 30, 2015

Please submit your abstract to: disabilitycentre@lshtm.ac.uk

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