ACCEPTABILITY AND CURRENT PRACTICE REGARDING FOOTWEAR FOR PEOPLE WITH INSENSITIVE FEET DUE TO LEPROSY

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Symposium: Footwear
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Background

• The role of footwear in lifelong protection of insensitive feet due to Nerve damage in Leprosy is well recognized but it remains an inadequately addressed area of Prevention of Impairment & Disability (POID)

• People with insensitive feet continue to neglect protective footwear resulting in
  – Ulcers & deformities
  – Loss of productivity
  – Stigma and enormous physical and mental suffering for them and their families
OBJECTIVES

• To understand the effectiveness of POID interventions in the management of the insensitive feet in the Leprosy Mission Trust India
METHODOLOGY

• The Leprosy Mission Trust India (TLMTI) conducted a POID audit in 2012 in 6 hospitals and 3 VTC’s
• The audit was designed by a team of POID resource persons with Leprosy expertise, both internal and external to TLMTI, and the audit was field tested
• The audit was conducted in 6 hospitals and 3 VTC’s in 7 states of India from April – June 2012
• Audit teams included Physiotherapists, Occupational therapists & Doctors
POID audit in TLMTI
METHODOLOGY

• Data were collected through Observations, hospital records, Semi structured Interviews (SSI) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)’s

• Interactions for the audit were with 343 individuals (34% females) affected by Leprosy in
  – Hospitals,
  – Community &
  – Vocational Training Centers (VTC)

• Interactions (feedback) were taken from a total of 159 staff
Results – Protective Footwear (MCR)

- MCR footwear which were outsourced and manufactured at a footwear company was more acceptable to patients.

- Choices were less for the patient in the in-house fabricated footwear – stigma among patients and communities.
Results – Orthosis

- Orthosis were given to all the anesthetic patients along with the footwear

- Accommodative and functional orthosis were given to patients

- Orthosis are either made through the MCR or Ethy Vinyl Acetate (EVA) Rubber
Results – Insensitive Feet Vs Podiatry Assessments

• Podiatry assessments are indicated for patients with anesthetic feet however in few hospitals it was not done

• Only 2 hospitals show an increasing trend in orthosis fabrication
Results – Acceptability/ Suitability of Footwear

• Stigma attached to the MCR footwear
• Identified as Leprosy patients
• Denied entry in local transports

• Increased acceptance due to design similarity with commercial footwear
• Only velcro are used for straps to avoid blisters & Ulcers
Conclusion

• Quality and standard of the footwear maintained by periodically sending the footwear for quality testing
• Alternatives to MCR’s like EVA rubber to be looked to improve acceptability
• The acceptability of footwear should be quantified by means of simple Visual Analogue Scale/ Pictorial Scale Podiatry assessments
• Innovations in developing custom made footwear within a short period for grossly deformed feet to be tried
“8 – POINT POID STRATEGY”
THANK YOU