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Health-Seeking behaviour among patients attending Tuberculosis care at health facilities in a rural sub- district of Mpumalanga Province

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Presentation outline



1. Background
2. Objectives
3. Methodology
4. Results
5. Discussions
6. Conclusion
7. Recommendations
8. References
9. Acknowledgements

Background



- TB is a major cause of ill health and one of the leading causes of death in countries worldwide (1).
- In the 2025 report, the World Health Organisation (WHO), reported that 10,7 million people were affected by TB and 1,2 million died (1).
- South Africa is one of the 30 high TB burden countries which accounts for 87% of the global TB burden.
- The country reported that 270 00 people developed TB in 2023 and 56 000 succumbed of the disease in 2023 (2).
- South Africa has moved from passive to active TB finding. This strategy, called Targeted Universal Testing for TB (TUTT), aims to identify symptomatic and non-symptomatic TB patients to improve TB outcomes, prevent further spread, and eventually reduce the TB incidence rate (2).

Background



- SA is still struggling to diagnose and start TB symptomatic patients on TB treatment timeously, despite great and progressive strategies in the management of the TB programme.
- People experiencing TB signs and symptoms of tuberculosis (TB) should immediately seek formal health care from a health facility.
- Delayed TB care can result in more serious illness, increased infectiousness, and risk of complications and mortality.
- Hence the study sought to understanding the health seeking behaviour of TB patients already initiated on TB treatment.

Objectives



- The main objective of the study was to assess health-seeking behaviour among patients already initiated on tuberculosis treatment care, to examine pre- treatment delay in selected health facilities in a rural sub-district of Mpumalanga Province.
 - ✓ Assessing the time taken to seek care
 - ✓ Factors associated with health seeking behaviour
 - ✓ Facilitators and barriers associated with health seeking behaviour

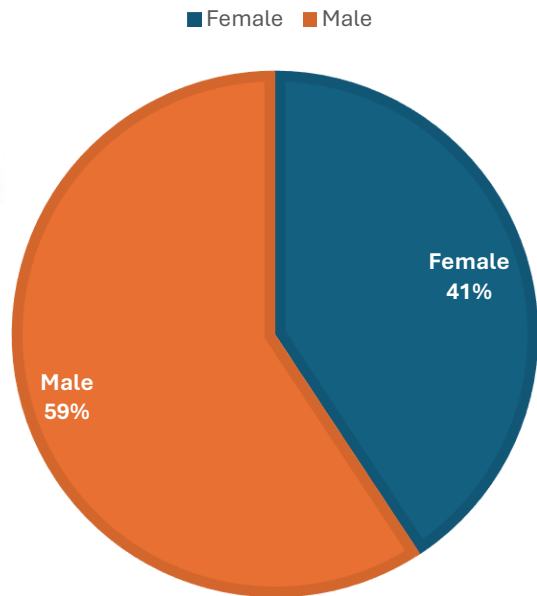
Methodology



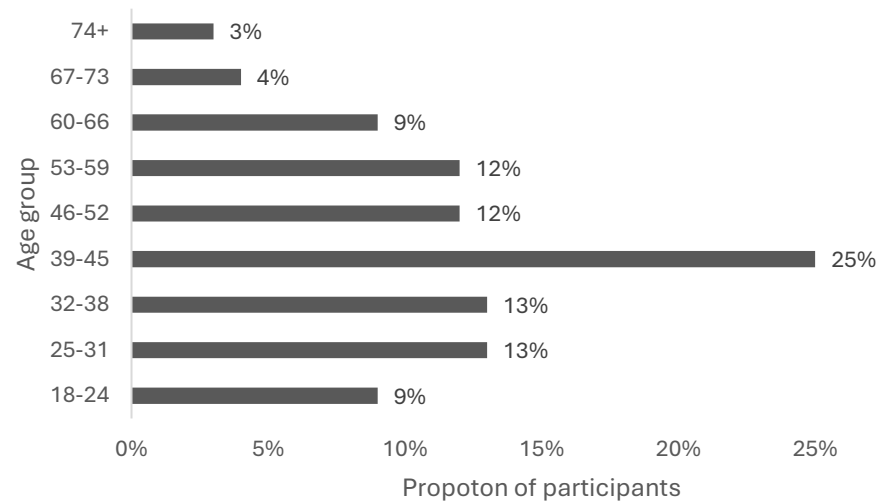
- This quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at selected health facilities among 221 participants who were on TB treatment. A questionnaire was used to collect data through interviews
- Convenience sampling was used for this study
- Epiinfo version 7.2.3.1 software for was used for data analysis.
- The outcome variable 'Health seeking behaviour' was determined by the number of weeks taken to visit a health facility after experiencing TB symptoms.
 - ✓ $\leq$ weeks categorised as good health seeking behaviour
 - ✓ >2 weeks categorised as poor health seeking behaviour

Results

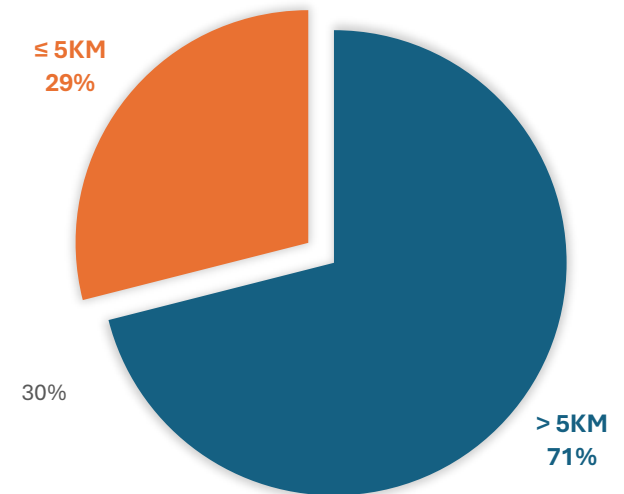
Gender



Age Group

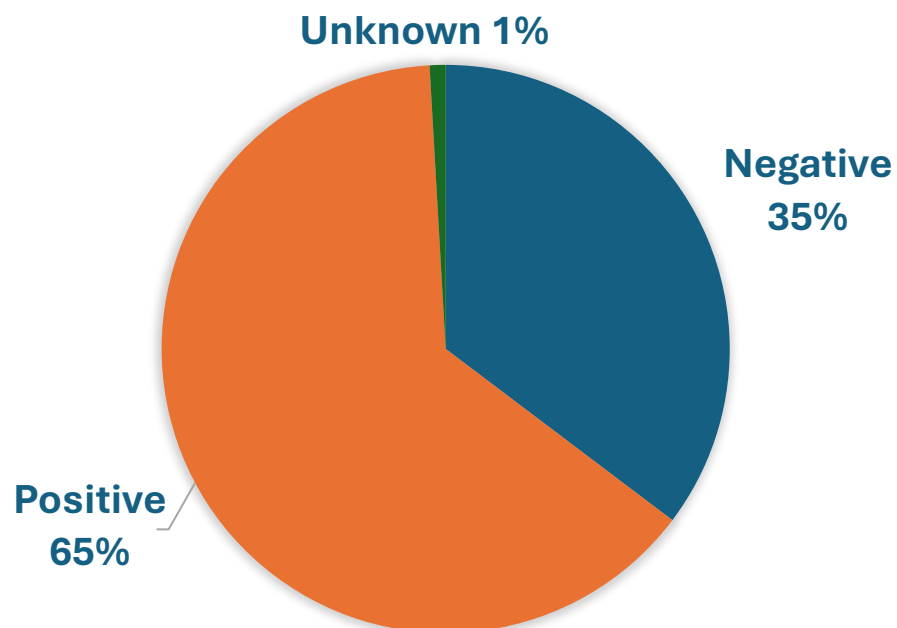


Distance to facilities

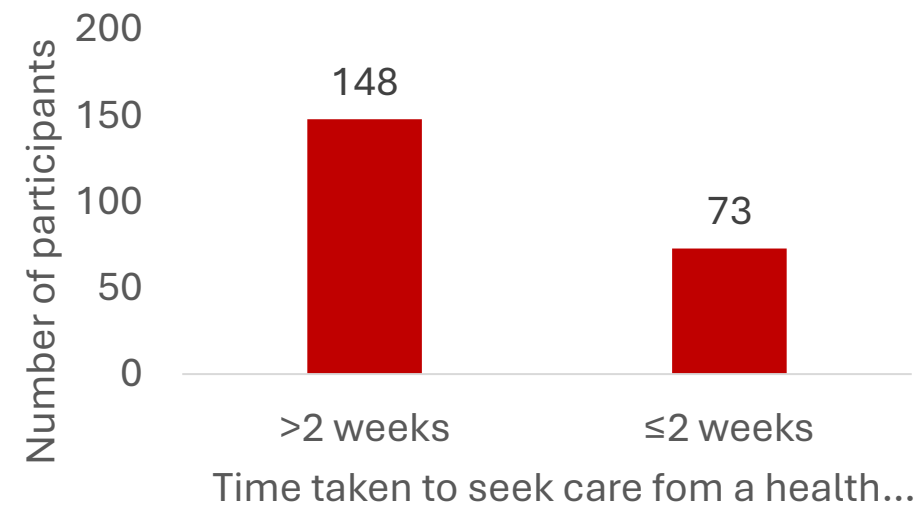


Results

HIV Status



Time taken before seeking medical care following symptom experience (weeks),



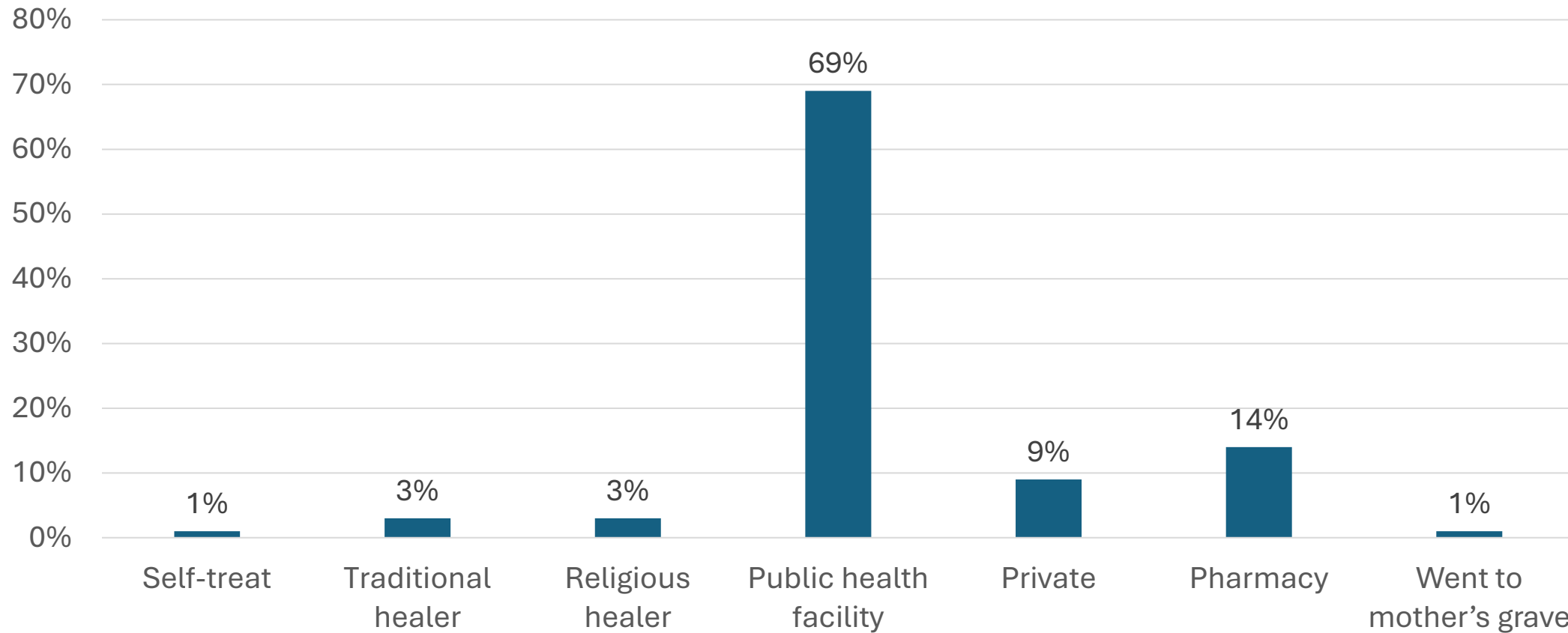
Results

Relationship between TB knowledge and health-seeking behaviour

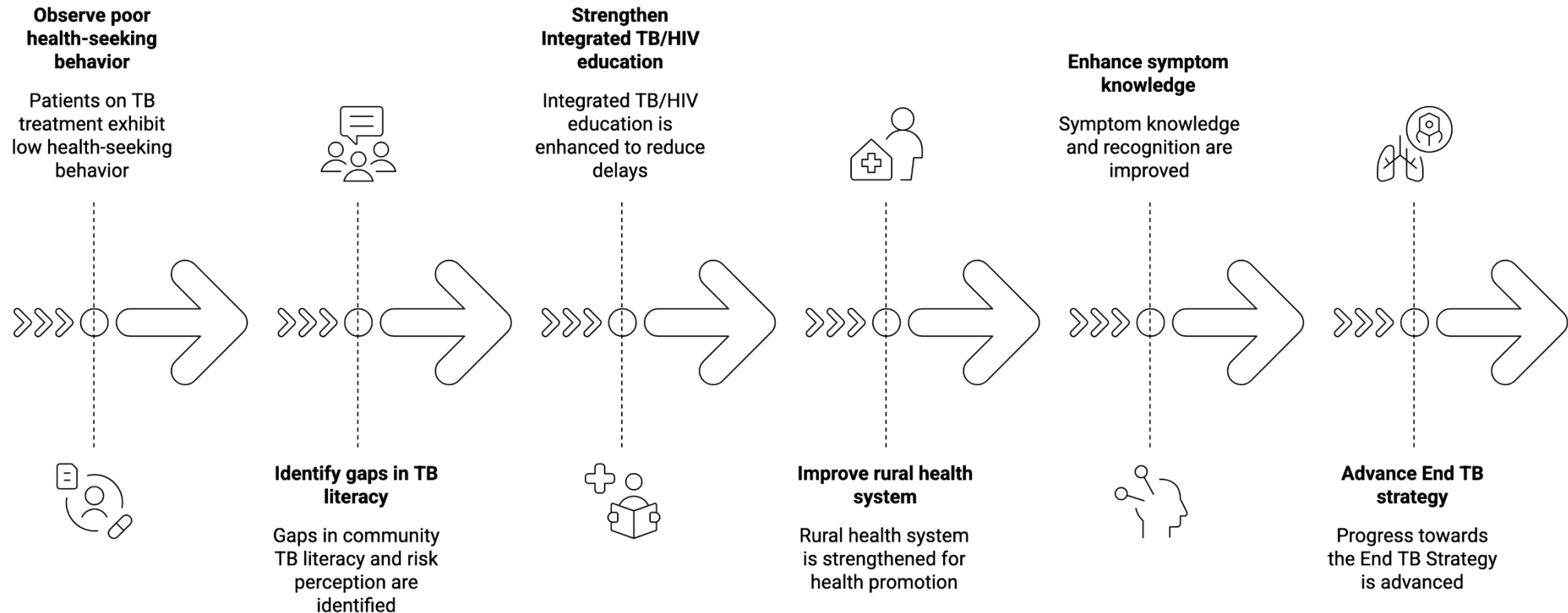
	Good health seeking behaviour	Poor health seeking behaviour	P value
I suspected I had TB when sick, before diagnosis.			
Agree	15 (20,5%)	43 (29,1%)	0,17
Disagree	58 (79,5%)	105 (70,9%)	
I am aware of the TB symptoms			
Agree	24 (32,9%)	53 (35,8%)	0,66
Disagree	49 (67,1%)	95 (64,2%)	

Results

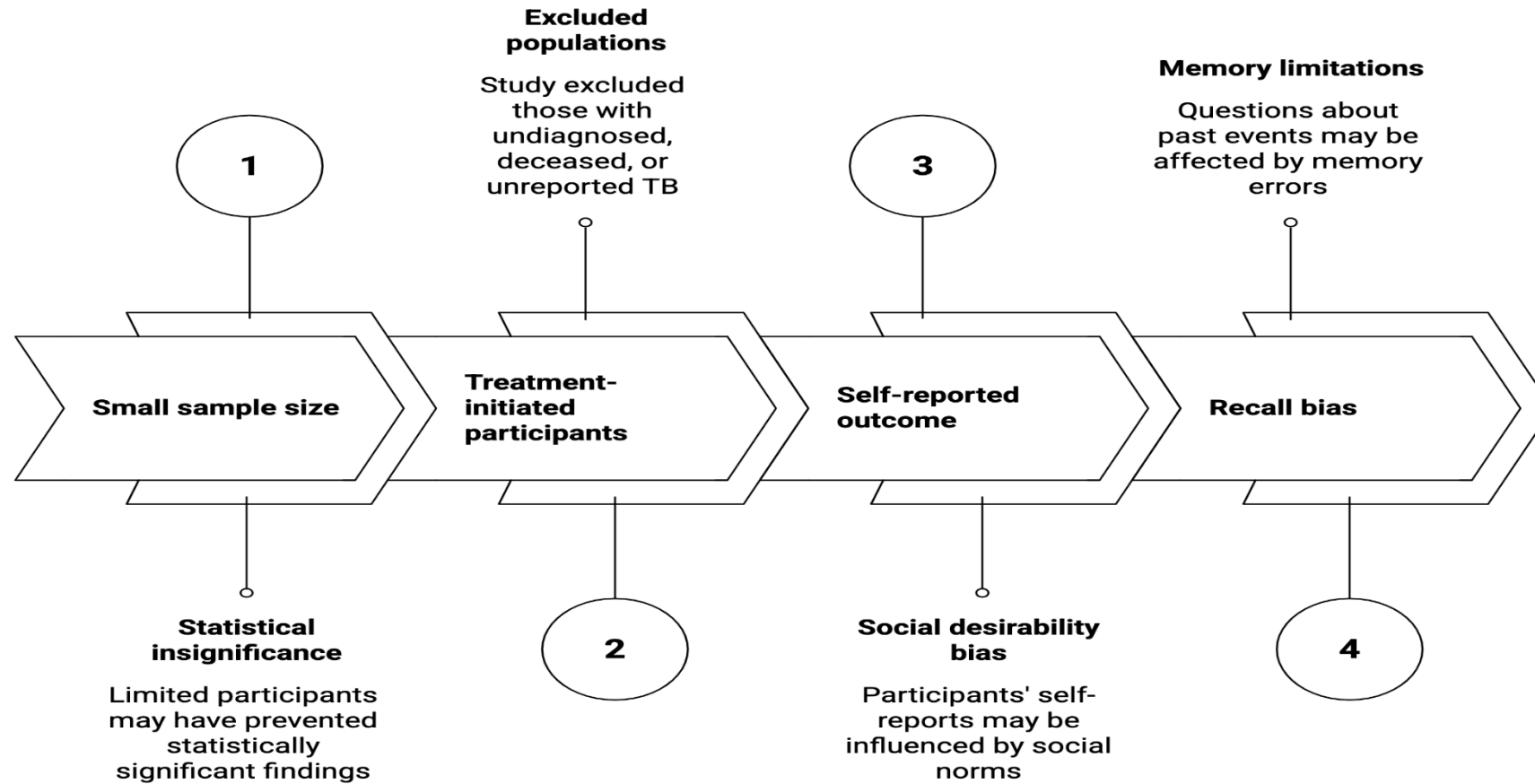
If > 2 weeks, the place where treatment was first sought n =148



Discussions



Limitations

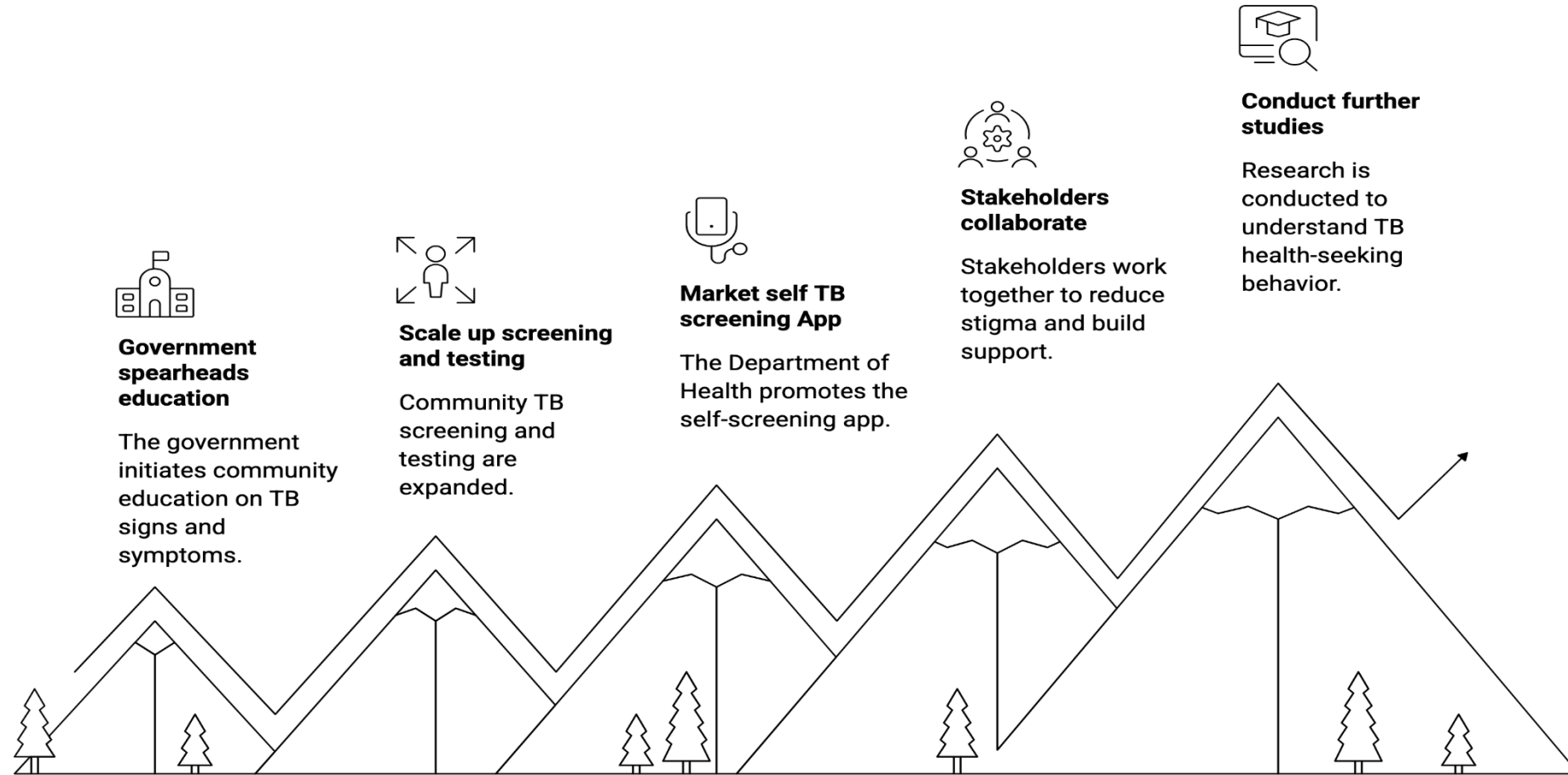


Conclusion



- The high prevalence of delayed health-seeking behaviour among patients already initiated on TB treatment underscores the critical gaps in community-level TB literacy among those who eventually seek care at health facilities.
- This needs to be addressed because TB is infectious, and the bacteria continue to spread if left untreated.
- Therefore, improving TB literacy, community-based health services, can affect health-seeking behaviour among patients with TB. Accelerating early health-seeking behaviour is vital in meeting the National recovery plan targets and advancing progress towards End TB.

Recommendations



References

1. World Health Organization, 2024, Global Tuberculosis report
2. National Department of Health, 2025, National TB recovery plan 4.0 2025/2026

Acknowledgement



- Ms Lindiwe Cele (Supervisor) - Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University
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Thank you