

Feasibility of implementing the FujiLAM assay and acceptability by health workers and patients

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Background

The novel urine-based FujiLAM test identifies tuberculosis in HIV-positive patients but may be challenging to use as a point-of-care (POC) test.

Objectives

We assessed the feasibility and acceptability of using the FujiLAM test at POC in outpatient settings.

Methods

We conducted a mixed methods study in four outpatient settings in Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, and Uganda between November 2020 and September 2021. The test was performed at POC in existing clinic laboratories and consultation spaces. We performed direct observations in the four health facilities, individual questionnaires, proficiency testing evaluations, and individual interviews among healthcare workers performing the FujiLAM test and group discussions with programme managers.

Results

Overall, 18/19 (95%) healthcare workers and 14/14 (100%) managers participated in the study. Most assessed healthcare workers, including lay health workers (10/11; 91%), met the minimum required theoretical knowledge and practical skill in performing the FujiLAM test. Most healthcare workers (17/18; 94%) found the FujiLAM test overall *“Easy/Very easy”* to perform. Some challenges were mentioned: many timed steps (5/18; 28%); ensuring correct incubation period (5/18; 28%) and test result readability (4/18; 22%). Half of the healthcare workers regularly performing the test (4/7; 57%) found it *“Easy”* to integrate into routine activities. Most healthcare workers and managers believed that any healthcare worker could perform the test after adequate training.

Conclusions

Implementing the FujiLAM test in outpatient POC settings is feasible and acceptable to healthcare workers and managers. This test can be performed easily in various clinic locations by any healthcare worker including lay workers. However, FujiLAM test, being a timed and multi-step test procedure may affect the workload pose some challenges in resource-constrained health facilities.