**UNDER STRICT EMBARGO Until 5:00 PM ET/11:00 PM CET ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21**

**Innovative drug-resistant TB treatment gave me hope**

*Naurizgul is a 27-year-old government worker in Nukus city, Uzbekistan. In 2020, she was diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB) and later signed up to join the TB-PRACTECAL clinical trial, where she received a six-month course of treatment.*

I remember 2020 as a year of highs and lows. My highlight was having my son in June 2020. This brought me such happiness. But the year also brought cons. I had COVID in September 2020. Due to COVID, I had inflammation in my lungs and was also diagnosed with TB.

The TB doctor said I needed to be hospitalised in the TB hospital, I was very upset and cried. I had a 10-week-old baby before my eyes. I wondered what would happen to my baby.

During that time, I had support from my husband and my mother, and my motivation for life increased. I knew TB was a curable disease.

The doctor informed me that I would be given two options for the treatment. First, they spoke about the standard DR-TB treatment regimens which can take up to two years, and that most patients around the world receive this treatment regimen. The second treatment option was to join a clinical trial, which was testing four different treatment options, three of which were 6-month treatment regimens consisting of a combination of new drugs, and one was a standard treatment regimen. She informed me that under the trial, the treatment option for me would be chosen at random.

I was interested in the possibility of a six-month treatment regimen and discussed it with my husband. We went to see the doctor and asked about the clinical trial and then she informed the clinical trial doctor and the counsellor who came and told me more about the clinical trial. They explained that participation in the trial was voluntary. They explained to me about the process, the regulations, and my rights as a patient. I was also informed that I could refuse without giving any reasons.

My hope at the time was that if I was lucky and put on a six-month regimen, I would return to my baby as soon as possible and my work would not be affected. I discussed this with my husband and he supported my opinion.

I was delighted when the doctor informed me that I would receive one of the six-month treatments. I started my treatment in the inpatient department on September 25 2020 and two months later, I continued my treatment as an outpatient. When I was in the hospital, my husband came to see me and supported me every day.

During the TB treatment, I had side effects including a heightened sense of smell, and I had nausea and vomited sometimes. The team took measures to manage the side effects which helped.

The counsellor listened to my inner feelings and emotions actively. They spoke with me to improve my motivation and taught me relaxation exercises.

During my treatment period, the lack of knowledge about TB among my family was clear and it was difficult to make them understand my situation. But I know that if I had not had TB, I wouldn’t have known much about it either.

On March 24, 2021, I completed my course of treatment. I was able to get back to work in September 2021. Soon, my son will be two years old. I am fulfilling the tasks of daughter-in-law and mother in my family.

I think this six-month treatment regimen is convenient to the patients. If I hadn’t joined the trial, I would still be on treatment now and I think this could have caused some challenges in my family and prevented me from continuing my work.

I am grateful to the clinical trial staff. They do medical checkups every two months. They do their tasks and take actions in any condition with responsibility.

I want to say to all the people who are diagnosed with TB that they can get cured. I encourage my peers to fight against TB. This disease is curable.