



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TURKMENISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Computers Free Time for Doctors

Computer technology improves work efficiency for physicians



Enesh (on the left) with her sister in law.
Photo: IREX

“[USAID’s] computer training has had such a great impact on the hospital’s day-to-day functioning as well as our staff’s performance.”

Kurban Tachliev, head of the TB hospital in Balkanabat.

Thanks to USAID-donated computers and computer training, doctor Maral Annaorazova’s workload has recently become more manageable, and now she is able to spend more time attending to her patients rather than filing reports.

Maral Annaorazova is one of only four primary doctors at the Tuberculosis (TB) Prevention Center in Balkanabat, Turkmenistan. The demands on her time are great: The hospital regularly treats 90 in-patients (an average of 23 in her care), and doctors see 60 more people (about 15 each) on the out-patient basis daily. These conditions would be challenging in any hospital, but until last winter, the TB Prevention Center did not have any computers, and all the paperwork was filled out by hand. Annaorazova says that this part of the duties used to consume 10-15% of her day.

In 2008, Balkanabat’s TB center received two computers from USAID. The computers were procured by USAID’s implementer Project Hope, while another USAID’s implementer, IREX, trained Annaorazova and eight of her colleagues to operate the full range of computer equipment and software that modern hospitals use. The TB center now employs electronic templates for patient registration, a digital patient database, electronic archives, and electronically-composed reports for submission to central authorities.

The center’s administrator Amanbagt Rahymova says that her workload has decreased by 80%. One of the two computers went to her office, since Rahymova is responsible for maintaining all hospital records and the patient database, as well as for filing reports to central authorities. “Using MS Word and Excel has made my work so much more efficient. Now I have more time for other duties,” Rahymova says. She spends some of that time helping with Annaorazova’s paperwork, so that the doctor can focus more on her patients. “If I spent 25 minutes with a patient before, now I have more than 50 minutes for each of them. I am so grateful for this,” says Annaorazova.

Rahymova notes that once the center can acquire more computers, at least one for each doctor, the impact will be four times as great for the hospital and its patients. Head of the TB hospital, Kurban Tachliev, agrees: “Computer training has had such a great impact on the hospital’s day-to-day functioning as well as our staff’s performance. I am waiting for the day we can equip our branches in the villages with computers and provide the doctors there with IT training. We would then be able to network our facilities and communicate so much more easily when exchanging information and reports.”