

Family Health

Concept of family health:

Family health provides, besides the cure of disease, various activities and programs in prevention, rehabilitation, and health promotion for all members of families/households.

It is more than the sum of individual health of these members, since it takes also into account the relationships between them, and between the family and its human, biological, and physical environment.

Specific indicators—demographic; genetic; of physical, mental, social health; socioeconomic; cultural—may be used to describe family health.

The new strategy for the delivery of PHC: is the Implementation of the Family Health Model .

It is comprehensive continuous health care for the family as one unit.

- It yields better results than care that is fragmented among unrelated and uncontrolled specialists.
- The family physician is the health care provider whom the family members contact first.
- The family physician treats all members of the family considering all the factors that influencing them.

The steps to implement the Family Health Model:

1) Establish fully equipped and efficient Family Health Units and Centers.

- health centers in both rural (one/500- 3000 population) and in urban area (one /5000-10000 population). A group of such centers is linked with district hospital, which in turn is linked with general and specialized hospital.

2) Determination of the catchment area , housing enumeration and family registration.

This step includes listing the numbers of population within a specific geographic area served by the family health unit. The aim of this step is to:

- registration of all the family members within the catchment area
- obtaining information (environmental, demographic, and health) ,
- identification of the vulnerable groups.

This data is recorded in the Family Health Folder

The family health Folder:

1. It includes all the health and illness events of each member of the family from birth to death to be useful for the family physician.
2. These data is useful for the family physician as it shows all preventive, curative services and investigations carried for each family member.
3. It is the tool for evaluating the health services.

3) Training to orient the health personnel regarding the Family Health Model approach.

4) Involving the community through a health committee.

Health committee is formed in every health center consisting of religious workers, school teachers, and a representative of the government. The committee should be informed about the role of the Family team in order to take appropriate actions to explore social, cultural and environmental problems related to health and diseases.

5) Organization of out-reach activities.

Out-reach activities are organized to those in need of these services (risk groups), to trace defaulters and to initiate immunization.

6) Orient the people to accept the Family Health Model as a tool for providing comprehensive health care rather than outpatient clinic.

7) Integration of preventive and curative services: integration of the existing health offices, MCH centers and other units to function as one unit in the name of PHC.

8) Coordination with teaching institutions for introduction of Family Health Model in the medical curriculum to orient the future health manpower about the concept of the Family Medicine, in addition to continued training of the health personnel.

Referral system:

Referral is the process in which the family physician at the family health unit or center who has inadequate skills due to his qualification and/ or lesser facilities at his level to manage a clinical condition, seeks the assistance of a better equipped and qualified specialist, with better resources at the higher level to guide him in managing a clinical

condition.

Referral does not mean transferring responsibility; it is sharing responsibility in patient care.

Doctors should know:

- When** a client should be referred to the secondary level,
- How** the client will get to the referral site,
- Who** the client should contact at the referral site,
- What** document carried by the client to be directed from the primary level to the referral site.

The Benefits of referral System:

For the Client:

- Early detection of diseases.
- Avoid loss from one hospital to another.
- Save time and effort.
- Draw the attention of the specialist.

For the family physician:

- learning and training process.
- Gaining self confidence.
- Help in organizing follow-up services.
- Increase communication between the health personnel.

For the Consultant:

- Save time and effort so relief hospitals from the burden.
- Can gather data about the patient leading to improve the quality of the patient's management.