

Community-Based Projects for Training in Community Nursing

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IT has been realized that 'Health for All' cannot be 'delivered' by health functionaries alone; it can be achieved only if the target group itself realizes the utility of various measures and actively participates in the process of health care. For this to be achieved it is necessary that there is more stress on community orientation of medical and para-medical personnel. Based on this realization the Reorientation of Medical Education Scheme was started to take undergraduates and faculty of Medical Colleges closer to the community.¹

Community-oriented projects given to the trainees during their basic training will help in achieving this objective. 'Nurse' is a vital component of health team both in the hospital set-up which is primarily curative and the community set-up where stress is more on preventive and promotive health care. In both these roles she can be more effective if she gets a first hand experience of health problems as perceived by the patients' family and the community. With this in mind some community-oriented projects were given to B.Sc. (Post-Certificate) Nursing students during their Primary Health Centre posting to facilitate their interaction with the rural community.

Methodology

The B.Sc. (Post-Certificate) Nursing students were posted at Primary Health Centre, Dayalpur, a part of Comprehensive Rural Health Services Project, Centre for Community Medicine, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi for a period of 4 weeks. The students were explained the objectives of the projects in the initial briefing. The following projects were assigned to the two batches after approval and assurance for help by the village non-formal leaders and the Panchayat.

Batch I

Tuberculosis Defaulter Follow-Up: The students were allotted one Tuberculosis defaulter's family each from Harijan Mohalla to follow up and take appropriate remedial action. Before starting this a meeting was organised with the leaders of Harijan Mohalla and they were explained the objectives.

Batch II

1. Poster Competition at Girls' School: Two Nurs-

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ing students each were given the topic of Nutrition and personal Hygiene for arranging poster competition for 7th and 8th classes of the Girls' School at Dayalpur. The Principal, science, crafts, physical training and drawing teachers of the school were involved in guiding the students. The Nursing students were given the responsibility of giving orientation to the students on the topics. Planning, laying out and content of the posters was left to the students under the guidance of their teachers. Two members of the Panchayat, two teachers and a health educator were the Judges. The winners were given prizes bought by the village Panchayat. One of the Nursing students got one hundred tooth powder tins donated from 'Dabur' which were given as participation prize. The winning posters were also displayed at the Exhibition arranged for the villagers.

2. Exhibition on Maternal and Child Health (MCH): The students in the batch were assigned different topics on MCH for the exhibition. An exhibition was prepared by Central Health Education Bureau, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Kotla Road, New Delhi. This was supplemented by posters, charts and other exhibits made by the Nursing students. Some local youth volunteers were trained by the Nursing students to explain the exhibits to the visitors under the supervision of the Primary Health Centre staff.

Results

Out of the seven Tuberculosis defaulter families allotted, the students were able to restart treatment in five of them. It was found that the remaining two were taking treatment from some other sources. The students brought two new cases of Tubercular lymphadenitis cases to the notice of the PHC staff for further management.

The second batch successfully organized the Poster Competition and the occasion was used to give health education to the whole school when prizes were being given away by the village Sarpanch. The response from the children and teachers was very good.

About 500 boys and girls from the local schools and 400 or so villagers visited the exhibition. The programme ended with a well-baby show where prizes were given away by one of the Panchayat Members and village leaders met the students over a cup of tea. They were very happy with the activities arranged and wanted more such activities in future.

Discussion

In most of the nurses' training programmes the community is restricted primarily to inpatients and their families and the urban slums where mostly it is group health talks that they deliver. In the present study an attempt was made to bring them in close interaction with the village community.

Defaulters are a known major problem in National Tuberculosis Control Programme in India. The project on defaulters helped the Nursing students to realize the factors responsible for dropout of patients started on treatment and the possible ways in which this can be dealt with. By converting five into regular drug takers and detecting two new cases the students could derive some sense of achievement as well.

The Poster Competition helped them in realizing one of the ways in which health education can be made more interesting to the school children. The exhibition on Maternal Child Health also gave them an opportunity to closely interact with the local community.

All these activities helped them in realizing the

importance of involving the local Panchayat and the non-formal leaders in carrying out health related activities in the village. The villagers extended their full support once they realized that these activities are for their own benefit. Community involvement is vital, especially for the preventive and promotive aspects of health care. This must be realized by all the members of the health team during their basic training. Such projects will help them in achieving this. Similar projects can be planned in other areas depending on the health problems prevalent in the field practice areas on the Nursing Colleges.

Community participation is one of the basic principles of Primary Health Care² without which the goal of 'Health for All by the Year 2000 A.D.' cannot be achieved.

References

1. Singh S, Goel RKD, Oberoi SK, Mittal S. 'Need for Reorientation of Medical Education.' *Indian J. Med Education*. 1985; 24:95.
2. Report of the International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma Ata, USSR, 6-12 September 1987.

Trained Nurses' Association of India Tamil Nadu State Branch

Educational Conference : Sept. 29, 1989

The Tamil Nadu State Branch of the Trained Nurses' Association of India will be holding an Educational Conference on 29th Sept. 1989.

Venue—College of Nursing, C.M.C. Hospital, Vellore-4,
N.A.Dt, Tamil Nadu.

Theme—HIV/AIDS

Registration fee and other charges must be remitted in advance by M.O. or D.D. before 15-9-1989 to the Vice President, Mrs. Selvakani Pandian, College of Nursing, C.M.C. Hospital, Vellore-4, N.A.Dt., Tamil Nadu.

Accommodation Charges: Rs. 50/- per day (double room)

Registration Fee: Rs. 35/-

Breakfast, lunch, snacks and evening tea—Rs. 25/- (For 29th only)

Accommodation will be arranged by Mrs. Selvakani Pandian on request, in advance.

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