

Health Visitors Page

Public Health work in connection with a Central Hospital

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"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven"

It has been a great privilege for me to have had the Health Visitor's Course along with my General Nursing so that I am able to understand and teach people both on preventive aspects, as well as to advise people on curative measures as the need arises in the course of my contacts with them.

In the following lines I would like to summarize the Public Health Work we do in connection with our Central Hospital.

In the District of Kolar there are two hospitals side by side one of which is a Government institution. At present there are two public health workers in our hospital, both of whom have completed their General Nursing in the same hospital and have undergone the Health Visitor's Course at the Lady Reading Health School, Delhi. I am indeed very grateful to the hospital, because the moment we enter into training the public health spirit is instilled into us; and throughout the period of training emphasis and encouragement are given on this line. Physical examination which is done yearly and on special occasions as the need arises; hygiene of the person and environment, recreation, etc. are some of the ways by which the public health spirit is being instilled and inspired in the minds of the students.

Our public health department is divided into various sections as Antenatal, Child Welfare, Dental hygiene, School Medical Examinations, Immunization, Home Visiting and Village social work.

As in many of the hospitals and welfare centres we also have organized an antenatal clinic which prenatal mothers from the various sections of the town attend. This clinic is being held once a week on Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. At this clinic each prenatal patient gets a thorough physical examination including blood pressure, complete blood examination and urine testing. Besides providing them with the necessary tonics, advice is also given according to their needs. Each visit is recorded in the prenatal examination sheet which is again connected with the post-natal sheet when the women delivers.

Our Child Welfare Clinic is conducted on Thursday evening between 4 to 6 p.m. at which babies born in our hospitals, and also those confined in the homes by our Midwife are brought in for weighing and instruction.

Our Dental Clinic has been inaugurated both for the in-patients and for the Public. This dental clinic is held thrice a week on Monday, Thursday and Saturday. We refer our prenatal to this clinic for advice and treatment on oral hygiene.

Home Visiting is done four times a week and the results are gratifying though not much of the result shows, for unless one steps out and looks in the homes one cannot understand what is being done there. It pains one's heart to see how babies are being kept in cloth cradles with no entrance for the air, wriggling like worms. It is simply agonizing to say that these, God's creation, have to go through some miserable treatment like burning their abdomens, especially around the umbilicus to ward off evils or are being given 2 to 4 teaspoonfuls of castor oil daily. I am sure that if these babies could speak out of their intense pain as a consequence of these, many of the parents would not subject their children to such cruelties.

It is also a great pleasure for the Public Health Nurse to collect dummies from the suckling infants and to hear scoldings from the mothers and children for this merciless action

We also visit patients in our hospital wards and this creates more confidence in us. Many people in the homes are interested very much in patients who are their friends, relatives or neighbours; and our visits in the wards help us in giving much comfort to the people at home; also it enables us for the following work

Amongst our various activities school medical examinations receive a very conspicuous place. We not only examine the schools near by but also most of the schools connected with our mission. We visit school children often and give them appropriate talks. Annually immunization is done for typhoid, cholera, diphtheria and so on, both in the hospital, out in the homes, and on school children.

At present as we are two, one takes the gospel of health to the various sections of the town, and the other stays at the dispensary waiting room to teach the patients as they come to see the doctor for medicine and treatment. She advises the patients as they come along on various aspects of health. We are very grateful to the doctors working at the dispensary for their co-operation in helping us in all the ways to spread this gospel of health. Dietary supplements such as klim, milk, multifoed, nutrim, pabulum etc. are served daily for the very poor people. It gives us the joy of seeing faces fill out and children grow round firm and smiling. We are also having a band of evangelists as we felt the necessity that physical healing in itself will not do, because spiritual and mental healing is more important than the physical needs. Moreover spiritual, mental and physical are so correlated that the one is dependent on the other for health and happiness as well as in times of sorrow and distress. On Monday as the evangelists go out to the villages with the gospel message one of us goes with them taking the gospel of health. It is a great pity to see how our villages lack in health. This does not mean that the towns and cities are much advanced. Even open air defecation is found in the roads in our so called towns and cities. In India as most of the people are illiterate and ignorant and live in the villages where they are on the darkest side of health, one has to emphasize a great deal such simple habits like combing of the hair, bath, dental hygiene etc. It is very encouraging and gratifying to see that the people are very receptive to health talks and try to adopt them practically as far as they can. We hope that in the course of time the people in the villages will be more hygienic than they are to-day.

On Saturday evenings we go out to the nearby villages for special work. We teach them songs, games etc. and show them health films on preventable diseases by the use of magic lantern which the Indian Red Cross Society has provided us. We also teach the villagers on matters of temperance such as prohibiting the use of alcohol, bires and cigarette, bettlenut chewing etc. by the use of charts and posters.

From what has already been stated one can visualize what an important subject public health is. People with real vision, enthusiasm, courage, leadership and knowledge are needed to be the pioneers of Public Health. Public Health is in its infancy in India at present and you and I are needed to develop this into maturity. As in any other country in India also maternity and Child Welfare starts the tremendous scope of preventive medicine.

The time has come and people have the vision that the health of a community, country, or nation depends on the health of the prenatal mothers. This health of the prenatal or expectant mothers depends on the type and degree of antenatal care and continuous health supervision and education of the mother on all branches of mothercraft including care of breasts and nipples; infant care and infant feeding. If the enlightened women of India want to raise the standard of living they must teach the different aspects of Public Health effectively. Even housewives can do a lot for their communities. Women have a role to play in special work both in health teaching and in propaganda among the under privileged groups especially in the villages. Lip service alone won't do unless the women of India step forward and undertake the risk.

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest."

Guide for Student Nurses' Units

PLEASE NOTE

1. Members of the Student Nurses' Association, applying for the Trained Nurses' Association, are eligible for its full privileges if they join immediately on completing their training i.e.
 - (a) Six months free journal.
 - b. Free Entrance Fee.
2. Members of the S.N.A. applying for the T. N. A. I., but not immediately on completing their training, the following is taken into consideration:—
 - (a) The number of months after completing training and applying to the T.N.A.I. is deducted.
 - (b) Members of the S.N.A. applying to the T.N.A.I. after the first six months have lapsed but within the year, are only eligible for free entrance fee.
3. Due to paper shortage handbooks are not printed these days.
4. As the cost of badges has gone up, a small fee of Rs. 3/- for T.N.A.I., Rs. 2/8/- for H.V.L. & M.U. each, is charged.

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