

Babylon University – College Of Medicine
Department of Community Medicine

*Lectures in Community Medicine
For 4th Stage Students
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Lecture 10

Primary Health Care

- In 1977 the World Health Assembly adopted the historic resolution on health: **Health for All by the Year 2000.**
- In September 1978 the world community at Alma-Ata international conference called for urgent action by all to protect and promote the health of all people of the world using the **Primary Health Care approach.**

Primary Health Care (PHC) is defined as essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technologies, made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community through their full participation and at cost the community and country can afford to maintain at every stage of their development in the spirit of self reliance and self determination.

The aim of PHC is: to provide the best possible health services to everyone everywhere in the district. The universal goal of the health system is to assure adequate access to quality care at a reasonable price.
(Equity for provision and equity in utilization of services)

1. Essential

Essential services means that these services or activities are needed and important for improving the health status of the community and so community can not go without it. *E.g. Immunization*

2. Acceptable

Are the health services acceptable to the people?

- Through health education, people will understand the benefits of the services.
- The services should be friendly with short waiting times.

3. Accessible

How do people reach the health services?

- It is especially important in areas with no clinic, bad roads and no public transport.
- Access should be equal to all members in the community.

4. Available

- We must be sure that all areas have health service coverage.
- This means that enough health facilities should be available so that every member of the community can reach them when needed.

5. Appropriate

Do the health services deal with the right problems?

Health staff should give most of their time and interest to the common diseases which cause most ill-health and deaths in the population rather than concentrating on few people with rare and interesting diseases.

6. Community Full Participation:

The participation of individuals is vital because they should identify and tell their own problems.

7. Affordable

Essential health care services should be provided at a cost that a country can afford

The Main Elements Of PHC Program:

1. Health education.
2. Promotion of adequate nutrition.
3. Immunization against the main infectious diseases.
4. Maternal; and child health care including family planning.
5. Ensuring accessibility to safe and adequate water supply and basic sanitation.
6. Control of locally endemic diseases.
7. Treatment of common diseases and injuries.
8. Provision of essential drugs.

Other elements can be added according to the health needs of the community examples are promotion of mental health, school health services and oral health services.

- whatever the components are health education is central to all PHC programs in any community
- We can see from the above that PHC services are not only promotive and preventive but also curative and rehabilitative.

Supportive programs of PHC:

- 1- Health information system.
- 2- Guide-lines, supervision and follow up.
- 3- Continuing education.
- 4- In services training.
- 5- Effective training.

Problems Facing PHC:

- 1- Financial
- 2- Administrative and technical
- 3- Political

The major PHC programs in Iraq:

- 1- Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI)
- 2- Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases (CDC)
- 3- Control of Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI)
- 4- Maternal and Child Health (MCH)
- 5- Promotion of Breast Feeding (BF)
- 6- Training of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)