

COMMUNICATION

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Practice of Health Communication

- ▣ Educational material should be designed to focus attention to provide new knowledge, to facilitate interpersonal and group discussion and to reinforce or clarify prior knowledge and behaviour.

Methods in Health Communication

- ▣ **Individual Approach**
- ▣ **Group Approach**
- ▣ **Mass Approach**

Individual Approach

- ▣ It may be given in personal *interviews* in the consultation room of the doctor or in the health centre or in the homes of the people. The individual comes to the doctor or health centre because of illness. Opportunity is taken in educating him on matters of interest — diet, causation and nature of illness and its prevention, personal hygiene, environmental hygiene, etc.
- ▣ The biggest advantage of individual health teaching is that we can discuss, argue and persuade the individual to change his behaviour. It provides opportunities to ask questions in terms of specific interests.
- ▣ The limitation of individual health teaching is that the numbers we reach are small, and health education is given only to those who come in contact with us.

Group Approach

- ▣ Lectures
- ▣ Demonstrations
- ▣ Group discussion
- ▣ Panel discussion
- ▣ Symposium
- ▣ Workshop
- ▣ Conferences
- ▣ Seminars
- ▣ Role play

LECTURES

- ▣ A lecture may be defined as carefully prepared oral presentation of facts, organized thoughts and ideas by a qualified person.
- ▣ The "chalk" lends the visual component.
- ▣ The talk should be based on a topic of current interest or health needs of the group.
- ▣ The group should not be more than 30 and the talk should not exceed 15 to 20 minutes.

LECTURES

The lecture method can be made more effective by combining with suitable audio-visual aids such as :

- (a) *Flipcharts* : They consist of a series of charts (or posters), about 25 by 30 cms or more, each with an illustration pertaining to the talk to be given. They are meant to be shown one after another.
- (b) *Flannelgraph* : A piece of rough flannel or khadi fixed over a wooden board provides an excellent background for displaying cut-out pictures, graphs, drawings and other illustrations.
- (c) *Exhibits* : Objects, models, specimens, etc. convey a specific message to the viewer. They are essentially mass media of communication, which can also be used in group teaching.
- (d) *Films and charts* : These are mass media of communication. If used with discrimination, they can be of value in educating small groups.

Group Discussion

- ▣ A "group" is an "aggregation of people interacting in a face-to-face situation".
- ▣ Is considered a very effective method of health communication.
- ▣ It permits the individuals to learn by freely exchanging their knowledge, ideas and opinions.
- ▣ For effective group discussion, the group should comprise not less than 6 and not more than 12 members.
- ▣ The participants are all seated in a circle, so that each is fully visible to all the others .
- ▣ There should be a group leader who initiates the subject, helps the discussion in the proper manner, prevents side-conversations, encourages everyone to participate and sums up the discussion in the end. If the discussion goes well, the group may arrive at decisions which no individual member would have been able to make alone. It is also desirable to have a person to record whatever is discussed

Panel Discussion

- ▣ 4 to 8 persons who are qualified to talk about the topic sit and discuss a given problem, or the topic, in front of a large group or audience.
- ▣ The panel comprises, a chairman or moderator and from 4 to 8 speakers.
- ▣ The chairman opens the meeting, welcomes the group and introduces the panel speakers. He introduces the topic briefly and invites the panel speakers to present their points of view.
- ▣ There is no specific agenda, no order of speaking and no set speeches .

Symposium

- ▣ A symposium is a series of speeches on a selected subject.
- ▣ Each person or expert presents an aspect of the subject briefly.
- ▣ There is no discussion among the symposium members like in panel discussion.
- ▣ In the end, the audience may raise questions.
- ▣ The chairman makes a comprehensive summary at the end of the entire session.

Workshop

- ▣ It consists of a series of meetings, usually four or more, with emphasis on individual work, within the group, with the help of consultants and resource personnel.
- ▣ The total workshop may be divided into small groups and each group will choose a chairman and a recorder.
- ▣ The individuals work, solve a part of the problem through their personal effort with the help of consultants, contribute to group work and group discussion and leave the workshop with a plan of action on the problem.
- ▣ The workshop provides each participant opportunities to improve his effectiveness as a professional worker.

Role Playing

- ▣ It is based on the assumption that many values in a situation cannot be expressed in words, and the communication can be more effective if the situation is dramatised by the group.
- ▣ The group members who take part in the socio-drama enact their roles as they have observed or experienced them.
- ▣ The audience is not passive but actively concerned with the drama.
- ▣ They are supposed to pay sympathetic attention to what is going on, suggest alternative solutions at the request of the leader and if requested, come up and take an active part by demonstrating how they feel a particular role should be handled, or the like.
- ▣ The size of the group is thought to be best at about 25.

Conferences and Seminar

- ▣ It contains a large component of commercialized continuing education.
- ▣ The programmes are usually held on a regional, state or national level.
- ▣ They range from once half-day to one week in length and may cover a single topic in depth or be broadly comprehensive.
- ▣ They usually use a variety of formats to aid the learning process from self instruction to multi-media.

Mass Approach

- ▣ Mass media are a "one-way" communication.
- ▣ They are useful in transmitting messages to people even in the remotest places.
- ▣ Their effectiveness can give high returns for the time and money involved.
- ▣ For effective health communication, they should be used in combination with other methods.

Television

- ▣ TV is a one-way channel.
- ▣ It can only be an aid to teaching.
- ▣ It cannot cover all areas of learning.
- ▣ It is raising levels of understanding and helping people familiarise with things they have not seen before, including crime and violence which are shown as part of feature programmes.

Radio

- ▣ Both radio and TV can reach illiterate population not accessible through printed word.
- ▣ It is a purely didactic medium.
- ▣ Radio is much cheaper and available widely.

Internet

- ▣ It has opened vast capability of transfer of knowledge, and has made it possible to get into direct and instant communication across the world by means of e-mail and even a on-line chat.
- ▣ This is a fast growing communication media and holds very large potential to become a major health education tool.

Newspaper

- ▣ They reach only a limited group, i.e. the literates in the community.
- ▣ Newspapers have limitation of having low readership in rural areas because of illiteracy.

Printed Material

- ▣ Magazines, pamphlets, booklets and hand-outs have long been in use for health communication.
- ▣ They are aimed at those who can read.
- ▣ Their usefulness lies in the fact that they can convey detailed information.
- ▣ They can be produced in bulk for very little cost, and can be shared by others in the family and community.

Direct Mailing

- ▣ The intention is to reach the remote areas of the country with printed word (e.g., folders and newsletters and booklets on family planning, immunization and nutrition etc.).
- ▣ These are sent directly to village leaders, literate persons, panchayats and local bodies and others who are considered as opinion leaders.
- ▣ Direct mailing has been a successful mass media in creating public awareness. It is possibly the most personal of mass communication.

Posters, Billboards

- ▣ The message to be communicated must be simple, and artistic.
- ▣ In places where the exposure time is short (e.g., streets), the message of the poster should be short, simple, direct and one that can be taken at a glance and easy to understand immediately.
- ▣ In places where people have some time to spend (e.g., bus stops, railway stations, hospitals, health centres) the poster can present more information.
- ▣ The right amount of matter should be put up in the right place and at the right time.

Health Museums and Exhibitions

- ▣ In exhibitions, there is a big element of personal communication through workers who explain each item on the exhibit. Printed literature explaining the exhibits is often freely distributed. Health exhibitions and museums thus offer a package of both personal and impersonal methods of communication.

Folk Media

- ▣ The term "mass communication" ought to refer to the totality of communication which takes within its compass not only the electronic media, but also folk (or indigenous) media such as keerthan, katha, folk songs, dances and dramas and puppet shows which have roots in our culture. The muslims have their own traditional folk forum like the ghazals, the kawali.

- ▣ The mass media are only "instruments". As such they are neither good nor bad; what matters is the message they carry and the way the message is delivered . There is no single way to do public education. Health education is still art rather than a science. Each community and country should develop techniques that meet its own needs.

Planning and Management

- ▣ 1. Collecting information on specific problems as seen by the community
- ▣ 2. Identification of the problem
- ▣ 3. Deciding on priorities
- ▣ 4. Setting goals and measurable objectives
- ▣ 5. Assessment of resources
- ▣ 6. Consideration of possible solutions
- ▣ 7. Preparation of a plan of action :
 - What will be done ?
 - When ?
 - By whom ?
- ▣ 8. Implementing the plan
- ▣ 9. Monitoring and evaluating the degree to which stated objectives have been achieved
- ▣ 10. Reassessment of the process of planning. Planning and evaluation are essential for effective health education.

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