

Tikrit University

College of Nursing

Clinical Nursing Sciences



Fourth Year - 2023-2024

Community Health Nursing

(Primary Health Care)

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Primary Health Care

What is Primary Health Care?

Primary Health Care is the first level of contact with the health system **to promote health, prevent illness, care for common illnesses, and manage ongoing health problems.**

The Alma-Ata Conference defined PHC as follows: - "Primary health care is essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound, and socially acceptable methods and technology made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community through their full participation and at a cost the community & country can afford to maintain at every stage of their development in the spirit of self-determination".

Principles of primary health care:

- 1.PHC services must have the following characteristic:** Accessibility, Availability, Affordability and Acceptability of Health Services.
- 2.Equitable distribution:** Health services must be shared equally by all people irrespective of their ability to pay, (rich or poor, urban or rural).
- 3.Community participation:** Involvement of individuals, families, and communities in promotion of their own health and welfare. Meaningful involvement of the community in the planning, implementation and maintenance of health services.
- 4. Intersectoral coordination:** Primary health care involves in addition to the health sector, all related sectors, in particular agriculture, animal husbandry, food industry, education, housing, public works, communication and other sectors. An important element of intersectoral approach is planning - planning with other sectors to avoid unnecessary duplication of activities.
- 5. Appropriate technology:** Appropriate technology is technology that is adaptable to local needs, acceptable to those who apply it and those for whom it is used, and that can be maintained by the people themselves.

Eight Essential Components of PHC Services

1. Health Education

Health education is the first, and one of the most essential, component of primary health care. By educating the public on the prevention and control of health problems, and encouraging participation, the World Health Organization works to keep disease from spreading on a personal level.

2. Promotion of food supply and proper nutrition.

Nutrition is another essential component of health care. WHO works to prevent malnutrition and starvation and to prevent many diseases

2. Supply of adequate water and sanitation.

A supply of clean, safe drinking water, and basic sanitation measures regarding trash, sewage and water cleanliness can significantly improve the health of a population, reducing and even eliminating many preventable diseases.

4. Maternal and child health care, including family planning.

Ensuring comprehensive and adequate health care to children and to mothers, is another essential element of primary health care. By caring for those who are at the greatest risk of health problems, WHO helps future generations have a chance to thrive and contribute to globally.

5. Immunization against the major infectious diseases.

By administering global immunizations, WHO works to prevent the major infectious diseases.

6. Prevention and control of locally endemic diseases.

Prevention and control of local diseases is critical to promoting primary health care in a population. Many diseases vary based on location. Taking these diseases into account and initiating measures to prevent them are key factors in efforts to reduce infection rates.

7. Appropriate treatment of common diseases and injuries.

Another important component of primary health care is access to appropriate medical care for the treatment of diseases and injuries.

8. Provision of essential drugs and basic laboratory services.

By providing essential drugs to those who need them, such as antibiotics to those with infections, caregivers can help prevent disease from escalating. This makes the community safer, as there is less chance for diseases to be passed along.

Role of Community health nursing in PHC services

Community health nurses work to improve the health and well-being of the communities they serve by educating them about illness, disease prevention, safe health practices, and how to obtain health care services. They also facilitate communication between people, their families, and the medical community in order to improve health outcomes.

Community health nurses are instrumental in creating programs that allow communities to become healthier and often provide treatment for poor, culturally diverse, and uninsured populations. Their work may include performing free health care screenings, vaccinations, and other forms of preventative care at reduced costs.