

APPROACHES TO PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE IN INDIA

Manisha Dubey*

Abstract

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An ideal health care services not only includes the medical institutions and practitioners but also various health care programs which are implemented to control communicable diseases, family planning, community's health, mother and child health care, which help the people in preventive manner to improve their health as well as safe guard from diseases, which in turn results into healthy and developed nation. Private sector is mainly concerned with curative aspect while government facilities are responsible for public health i.e. disease prevention and control as well as sanitation. The present paper deals with the various schemes, programs and national initiatives to provide universal access to quality health care in India. The approach of government is to increase access to the decentralized public health system by establishing new infrastructure in deficient areas and by upgrading the infrastructure in the existing institutions. The union ministry of health and family welfare is instrumental and responsible for implementation of various programs on national scale in the areas of health and family welfare, prevention and control of major communicable diseases and promotion of traditional and indigenous systems of medicines. In addition, the ministry also assists states in preventing and controlling the spread of seasonal disease outbreaks and epidemics.

*** Department of Geography, M.L.B. Government Girls P.G (Autonomous) College, Bhopal, M.P**

1. Introduction

An ideal health care services, not only includes the medical institutions and practitioners, but also various health care programs which are implemented to control communicable diseases, family planning, community's health, mother and child health care, which help the people, in preventive manner to improve their health as well as safe guard from diseases, which in turn result into healthy and developed nation.

Study Profile: The geographical extent of the study area is 8⁰4' to 37⁰6' north latitude and 68⁰7' to 97⁰25'. It holds the population of 1210854977 million, out of which 68.84 percent is rural. The literacy rate of the country is 73.0 percent where as sex ratio is 943 females per thousand males (Census, 2011).

2. Research Method

The present study is carried on the basis of data and information collected by author from the Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, New Delhi. Reports from newspaper, magazines, etc, are also consulted.

3. Results and Analysis

Private sector is mainly concerned with curative aspect while government facility are responsible for public health i.e. disease prevention and control as well as sanitation. As far as public health is concerned, areas of operation have been divided between Union government and State government in the view of the federal nature of the constitution. Though some items like public health, hospitals, sanitation, etc. fall in the state list, the items having wider ramification at the national level like family welfare and population control, medical education, prevention of food adulteration, quality control in manufacture of drugs etc. have been included in concurrent list. The Central government has also provided to the states funding as well as the design and components of various national programs for Leprosy, Tuberculosis, Blindness, Malaria, Smallpox, Diarrhea, Filarial, Goitre and now HIV/AIDS.

These programs are implemented uniformly across the length and breadth of the country. The states also implement the centrally funded and designed programs of family planning and universal immunization. The Union ministry of health and family welfare is instrumental and

responsible for implementation of various programs on national scale in the areas of health and family welfare, prevention and control of major communicable diseases and promotion of traditional and indigenous systems of medicines. In addition, the ministry also assists states in preventing and controlling the spread of seasonal disease outbreaks and epidemics through technical assistance. Expenditure is incurred by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare either directly under central schemes or by way of grants-in-aids to the autonomous/statutory bodies and NGO's. In addition to the centrally sponsored family welfare programs, the Ministry is implementing several World Bank assisted programs for control of AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis in designated areas. Besides, State Health Systems Development Projects with World Bank assistance are under implementation in various states. All these schemes aim at fulfilling the national commitment to improve access to primary health care facilities keeping in view the needs of rural areas and where the incidence of disease is high.

Major Health Initiatives and Programs : The ministry of health & family welfare is implementing various schemes, programs and national initiatives to provide universal access to quality health care. The approach is to increase access to the decentralized public health system by establishing new infrastructure in deficient areas and by upgrading the infrastructure in the existing institutions.

1. National Health Mission (NHM) : The time bound quantifiable goals to be achieved through specific road maps with appropriate linkages and financial allocations for strengthening the health infrastructure is the main aim NHM. A continuous flow of good quality information on inputs, outputs, and outcome indicators, is essential for monitoring the progress of NHM at closer intervals. National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) are a part of the plan as its two sub-missions, to achieve universal access to equitable, affordable, quality health care services to the rural and urban areas respectively.

NRHM: The thrust of the mission is on establishing a fully functional, community owned, decentralized health delivery system with inter-sectoral convergence at all levels, to ensure simultaneous action on a wide range of determinants of health such as water, sanitation, education, nutrition, social and gender quality, especially the vulnerable groups.

The major initiatives under **NRHM** are: ASHAs, *Rogi Kalyan Samiti*, United Grants to Sub-Centres, Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committee, *Janani Suraksha Yojana*, *Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakarm*, Mother and Child Tracking System, and many others. The new initiatives of NRHM are as follows:

- Rashtriya Bal SwasthyaKaryakram
- Rashtriya Kishore SwasthyaKaryakram
- Mother and Child Health Wings
- Free Drugs and Free Diagnostic Services
- National Iron+ Initiatives
- Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Services
- Identifying “Delivery Points”
- Universal Health Coverage
- Mother and Child Tracking Facilitation Centre
- Quality Assurance
- ASHA Certification
- NGO Guidelines

The national programs under NRHM are mentioned below:

- National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme
- National Leprosy Eradication Programme
- Revised National TB Control Programme
- National Programme for Control Of Blindness
- National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme

NUHM : It envisages to meet health care needs of the urban population with the focus on urban poor, by making available to them essential primary health care services and reducing their out of pocket expenses for treatment. NUHM would endeavour its goal through:

- Need based city specific urban health care system to meet the diverse health care needs of the urban poor and other vulnerable sections.
- Institutional mechanism and management systems to meet the health related challenges of a rapidly growing urban population.

- Partnership with community and local bodies for a more proactive involvement in planning, implementation, and monitoring of health activities.
- Availability of resources for providing essential primary health care to urban poor.
- Partnership with NGOs, for profit and for profit and not for profit health service providers and other stakeholders.

NUHM covers all state capitals, district headquarters and cities/towns with a population of more than 50000. It would primarily focus on slum dwellers and other marginalized group like rickshaw pullers, street vendors, railway and bus station coolies, homeless people, street children, and construction site workers.

2.Other Major National Health Programmes: To control and eradicate various diseases other than above mentioned initiatives, government have launched many programs to achieve the goal of “HEALTH FOR ALL”. Some aspects of some of these programs are covered in NHM strategies, few are summarized below:-

- National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Strokes.
- National Tobacco Control Programme.
- National Mental Health Programme.
- National Programme for Prevention and Control of Deafness.
- National Programme for Prevention Control of Fluorosis.
- National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly.
- National STD Control Programme.
- Maternal Health Programme.
- Child Health Programme.
- Pulse Polio Immunization Programme.
- Family Planning Programme.
- Integrated Disease Surveillance/Programme.
- Drug De Addiction Programme.
- National AIDS Control Programme.

- Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.

In a vast country like India, full of diversity and disparities, it is a big challenge to implement, the various programs in the health sector following the policy guidelines within the constitutional and legal framework and to achieve the desired impact on all sections of population, especially the deprived ones. From this point of view, Management Information System is designed to collect and report information on a program, which allows managers at all levels to plan, monitor, and evaluate the operations and the performance of the whole program.

4. Conclusion

On the basis of findings and analysis, following are the main suggestions for preventive health care :

1. Though to provide preventive medical care is government's responsibility, but to have best possible delivery of these programs, it should essentially become the group task.
2. Various health programs are providing curative and preventive health services, which is conducted through various allopathic health centers and health personal, it can also be provided through Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and even centers of other health care systems.
3. Health oriented education programs will be the most effective step to promote the health of the people.
4. The role of private sector voluntary agencies should be widely extended, by providing them with some incentives as they are the main health care providers.
5. It is desirable to provide the medical care in remote areas through mobile units with a specialist medical personal.

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