

## Introducing Health Promoting Orientation in Hospitals: A Desirable Approach in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Amarjeet Singh<sup>1</sup>, Akshay Anand<sup>2</sup>, Nidhi Jaswal<sup>3</sup>, Rajbir Kaur<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Professor & Head, <sup>3</sup>Senior Demonstrator, <sup>4</sup>Junior Demonstrator; Health Promotion, Community Medicine & School of Public Health PGIMER, Chandigarh, Punjab, India

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Neurosciences, Neurology Department, PGIMER, Chandigarh, Punjab, India

**Correspondence** : Dr. Amarjeet Singh, Email:dramarjeet56@gmail.com

The role and purpose of hospitals has drastically changed over last two centuries. It is no longer restricted to providing curative services only. As per WHO Ottawa charter, health promotion concept is now being sought to be applied in all spheres of our lives and in all settings including the hospitals. In a Health Promoting Hospital (HPH), the facility design and planning should ensure adequate floor space for beds, safe water supply and sanitation, ventilation, hygienic conditions, hand washing facilities, isolation facilities, regulation of traffic flow, pest control, waste management, waiting facility, disabled friendly facilities. There is also a need to have a balance between functions and aesthetics of hospitals.

As per this concept, the emphasis of hospital care has now shifted from acute to chronic illness; curative to preventive medicine; restorative to comprehensive medicine; inpatient care to outpatient and home care; Individual orientation to community orientation; isolated function to area-wise or regional function; tertiary and secondary to primary health care and from episodic care to total quality care.

This approach can have a major public health impact by improving the quality of hospital care, limiting the dependence of patients and their caretakers on hospital staff, reducing the risk of the community from waste-related infections and above all, improving the health of staff which would eventually reduce absenteeism and enhance their productivity. This shift in perspective will surely yield rich dividends e.g., reduction of length of stay in hospital, reduction in complications, reduction in admission and readmissions. Healthcare professionals in hospitals can also have a lasting impact on influencing the behavior of patients and relatives, who will be more responsive to health advice given in hospitals.

HPH approach will also help in prevention of transmission of hospital acquired infections by

adopting simple measures, e.g., washing of hands by medical/paramedical personnel before and after contacting each patient and specimen. Healthcare workers should receive vaccinations for hepatitis B, tetanus etc. Here, infection control committees may provide a forum for multidisciplinary input and cooperation, and information sharing.

Hospitals are in strong position to be the advocates for health promotion. They represent the main concentration of health service resources, professional skills and medical technology. In western countries, hospitals are increasingly positioning themselves as the leading providers of health promotion services within the community. This is important since even the health field concept entails that health and illness result from the interplay of genetic factors, environment, lifestyle and medical services. In India, this movement is yet to take off.

In this context, it is not out of context to mention that University Grants Commission, India held its 1<sup>st</sup> Round Table National Consultation for formulation of the policy on Health Promoting Universities (HPU) on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019, in Delhi. The meet highlighted the involvement of universities in addressing the health needs of the community. By 2022, at least 50% of higher educational institutions are expected to implement core principles/ set standards of HPU. Also, emphasis was put on a need to evolve models of Academic Social Responsibility (ASR) and Institutional Social Responsibility (ISR). By implication, broadening of the scope of HPU to Health Promoting Educational Institutions will include medical colleges and apex medical institutions also. This envisages capacity building of students and staff for health promotion within and outside the hospitals. In fact, a good hospital must have a humanizing environment that can contribute positively to the health of patients as well as its staff by offering an atmosphere of safety, security, cleanliness and physical comfort.

The proposed HPH models may include consultations services to be provided for community participations & social interactions (e.g. student clubs). Organization of regular seminars or talks on health promotion may be encouraged with wider participation. So, apart from medical care provision, hospitals may arrange for periodic health check-ups through regular screening of students, staff and visitors.

Since Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) is an education and research institute, introduction of a concept of HPH can be one of the most cost effective investments it can make to improve the relationships with patients and community members. Of course, simultaneously, it has to retain and nurture the highest standards of service (patient care), education and research.

In fact, this has been pilot tested through the Neuroscience Research Lab of the institute, which has introduced ASR initiatives. Its members are dedicating 2 hours every week in actively cleaning the areas in and around the institute complex for more than 233 weeks now. Their goal was not only to create and sustain cleaner and healthier environment around the Institute but also to bring positive changes among patients, their relatives and people working in the Institute. Their work has resulted in a drastic change in the vicinity of the Institute. A dumping area was changed into a garden. Several dustbins were installed at the pavement where people used to litter the waste on the street. New urinals were also built near the boundary wall of PGIMER. A foot path was made through the lawns to prevent people from walking on grass.

Besides this, the Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh is also working towards interdisciplinary collaboration for enhancement of the patient/caregivers' satisfaction through implementing the concept of 'Patient-Centred Care' in the Institute. Already, our humble contributions on the issue are uploaded on the PGI website (<http://pgimer.edu.in/>), under the icon of "Public Forum", drop down menu in 'patient empowerment' section. Here, our collaborative work on developing patient education material with Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopaedic and Surgery departments are summarised.

The Department has also initiated few new concepts like HPU, ASR and ISR within and around the campus since November 1, 2019. The initiative proposes to harness, harvest and nurture the vast unidentified and submerged potential of the students and staff of the department to enhance the image of PGIMER. The proposed venture is based on the fact that, so far, within the Department, the training of students of Master of Public Health and Bachelor of Public Health was mostly class room based. It is proposed to involve them in practical ASR/ISR activities which will help in improving the institute's image. It is also proposed to develop a plan to enhance the quality of physical, social and mental environment of the institute. Moreover, 1 hour every Saturday has been given to "Open house session" in the Department which is open for all members to provide a platform for exchange of ideas on health related issues among the students, staff and employees.

For maximum output, hospital based health promotion services should be multi-disciplinary. Besides integrating health promotion policy for patients, staff and visitors into its vision, implementation of HPH concept requires strong leadership and commitment at different levels. Hospitals have the unique opportunity to embrace such change so that they can be a centerpiece of a 21<sup>st</sup> century intelligent health system. This level of change requires acceptance by all stakeholders for new values, visions and goals.

#### References:

1. Vasilescua R, Barnab C, Epurec M and Baicud C. Developing university social responsibility: A model for the challenges of the new civil society. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2010; 2: 4177-4182.
2. Anand A, Banik A, Minhas G et al. Creating a role model for "Academicians" Social Responsibility (ASR) synergizing with *Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan*: A campus hygiene initiative by PGIMER, Chandigarh. *Annals of Neurosciences*; 2019; 26:75-81
3. Singh AJ. Ideology of Health Promotion. In. "Health Promotion: Need for Public Health Activism Vol I", Singh AJ, Goel S and Kathiresan J.(editors) Germany LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2013.
4. Ahuja P K, Gupta AK, Jain B, Singh A and P Bains: Health Promoting Hospitals. In. Singh AJ, Goel S and Kathiresan J.(editors) Health Promotion: Need for Public Health Activism Vol II, Germany LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2013
5. Goel S, Gupta A.K, Singh A.J. Hospital Administration-A Problem Solving Approach. 1st Edition. Elsevier Publishers, India 2014
6. Mental health in the workplace. World Health Organization. 2019 [cited 3 December 2019]. Available from: [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/in\\_the\\_workplace/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/in_the_workplace/en/)