

Opinion**HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITAL: A NOBLE CONCEPT****Kar Sitanshu S¹, Roy Gautam², Lakshminarayanan Subitha³**

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ABSTRACT

Settings based approach to health promotion was founded in order to improve people's health where they spend most of their time: in organizations, and it acknowledges that behavioural changes are only possible and stable if they are integrated into everyday life and correspond with concurrent habits and existing cultures. One of the key strategies identified in the Ottawa Charter was re-orientation of health services. Hospitals provide considerable opportunity to engage a broad section of the community through patients and their family members as well as their own staff and personnel. The WHO Regional Office for Europe started the first international consultations in 1988, followed by the European Pilot Hospital Project in 1993, in 20 partner hospitals from 11 European Countries. WHO Health Promoting Hospital movement focuses on four areas: promoting the health of patients, promoting the health of staff, changing the organization to a health promoting setting, and promoting the health of the community in the catchment area of the hospital.

The International Network of Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH) acts as a network of networks linking all national/regional networks. In total, it consists of 38 National / Regional HPH Networks, collaborating to reorient health care towards active promotion of health, with 800 hospital and health service members in more than 40 countries. Health promoting hospital concept in India is very new and till date, only three hospitals are at various stages of being developed as HPH. However this initiative should evolve from the project mode to the programme mode.

Key words: Health promotion, hospital

INTRODUCTION

Health, as defined by World Health Organization, is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity ¹. While "curative" medicine is delivered to symptomatic patients who seek health care, health promotion and preventive interventions often attempt to modify individuals' lives. ² Health promotion is defined as "the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health" ³.

APPROACHES TO HEALTH PROMOTION

Based on the notion of health as a positive concept, the Ottawa Charter put forward the idea that "health is created and lived by people

within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love" ³. This setting based approach to health promotion was founded on the experience of community and organizational development in order to improve people's health where they spend most of their time: in organizations. This led to a number of initiatives such as Health Promoting Cities, Health Promoting Schools, Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH), etc., ⁴. The settings approach acknowledges that behavioural changes are only possible and stable if they are integrated into everyday life and correspond with concurrent habits and existing cultures. Health Promotion interventions in organizations therefore not only have to address changing individuals but also underlying norms, rules and cultures.

The Ottawa Charter ³ identifies five priority action areas for health promotion, viz.

- Build healthy public policy
- Create supportive environments for health
- Strengthen community action for health
- Develop personal skills
- Re-orient health services

HEALTH PROMOTION IN HOSPITALS

One of the key strategies identified in the Ottawa Charter was re-orientation of health services. Over several years health services including hospitals have been considered as an appropriate setting to implement health promotion initiatives. Hospitals are well placed to advocate for health promotion because of the central role they play in providing health care services within the community. In rural communities the importance of health services/hospitals needs no explanation. Hence, hospitals provide considerable opportunity to engage a broad section of the community through patients and their family members as well as their own staff and personnel. One of the major recommendation was also to invest not only in clinical interventions, but also in other interventions to improve health: Educating persons for self-management (lifestyle approach) and developing situations to make the "healthy choice the easy choice"³.

HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITAL - PILOT PROJECT

In order to support the introduction of health promotion programmes in hospitals, the WHO Regional Office for Europe started the first international consultations in 1988. In the subsequent year, the WHO model project "Health and Hospital" was initiated with the hospital Rudolfstiftung in Vienna, Austria, as a partner institution. After this phase of consultation and experimenting the HPH movement went into its developmental phase, being marked by the initiation of the European Pilot Hospital Project by the WHO Regional Office for Europe in 1993. This phase, which lasted from 1993 to 1997, involved intensive monitoring of the development of projects in 20 partner hospitals from 11 European Countries. Subsequent to this pilot phase, national and regional networks were developed and the network reached its consolidation phase. Since then, national and regional networks take an

important role in encouraging the cooperation and exchange of experience between hospitals of a region or a country, including the identification of areas of common interest, the sharing of resources and the development of common evaluation systems⁵.

FOCUS AREAS OF A HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITAL

Given the scope of possible health promotion interventions in hospitals, the WHO HPH movement focuses on four areas: promoting the health of patients, promoting the health of staff, changing the organization to a health promoting setting, and promoting the health of the community in the catchment area of the hospital. However, before starting the initiative, a hospital has to have a written policy for health promotion. This policy must be implemented as part of the overall organization quality system and aim to improve health outcomes. The general principles to develop an action plan for developing the hospital into HPH is as follows. Initiatives that can be undertaken in this regard are listed in table 1.

A. Patients' health needs

- **Physical health needs** of patient include the intervention for which the patient seeks care, i.e., appropriate treatment, supportive care, adequate and acceptable nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.
- **Psychological and emotional health needs** need to be addressed apart from the health needs per se.
- **Socio economic health needs** - Resources are an important determinant for where to seek care.

B. Health needs of the Staff

- **Physical health needs** of the staff to be addressed are adequate nutrition, breaks and recreation, physical activity, minimal risks of accidents and infections.
- **Psychological and emotional health needs** like coping with stress, managing stressors within the hospital and work-life balance can be addressed by training in this regard.
- **Social health needs** - social relationships at work, career development, participation in all organizational activities

C. Changing Hospital Organization to promote Health

Apart from hospital policies for health promotion and specialist units with professionals, regular health promotion information and health promotion involvement of staff and leadership is necessary. This can be met by formation of health circles, employee suggestion system, implementation projects, news-letters, annual presentations and forum on website. Regular monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement initiatives of health

promotion outcomes and impact in the hospital can be done by surveys, balanced score card, etc.

D. Community health needs

The community reflects the larger pool from which the hospital gets its clientele. The community requires clear information about the services available at the hospital in order to avail them. Also the hospital may pose a health risk to those living around it due to hospital waste, traffic flow, increased consumption of community resources etc.

Table 1: Strategies for developing a hospital to Health Promoting Hospital

A. Health Needs of The Patients

Physical Health Needs	Psychological And Emotional Health Needs	Socio Economic Health Needs
1. Functional and safe design of hospital	1. Providing information on treatment, diagnostic procedures and results	1. Promotion of generic drug prescription
2. Adherence to standard treatment guidelines	2. Involving patients in decision making	2. Free treatment to poor patients
3. Adequate hygiene to prevent hospital infections	3. Enabling patients to improve health literacy	3. Provision of guesthouses/ <i>dharamsalas</i> for patients relatives within the campus with nominal fee
4. Appropriate lighting and ventilation	4. Communicating in a supportive and respectful manner	
5. Devices to prevent accidents, eg falls in elderly	5. Respecting patients' privacy	
6. Adequate and appropriate food	6. Infrastructure for patient leisure time activities	
7. Support to adopt a healthy lifestyle - tobacco cessation services, nutrition counselling, promoting breast feeding, physical activity	7. Providing adequate visiting hours	
	8. Organizing visiting and lay support services for unattended patients	
	9. Support for coping with stress	
	10. Support following discharge	
	11. Supporting self-help groups	

B. Health Needs of The Staff

Physical Health Needs	Psychological and Emotional Health Needs	Social Health Needs
1. Functional and safe design of hospital	1. Staff training for stress management	1. Mentoring and training for career development
2. Developing work schedules that allow for breaks	2. Support for coping with stress	2. Engagement and participation of staff across hierarchical, professional and departmental boundaries
3. Enable staff to make healthy eating choices by providing nutritious food	3. Developing staff-friendly work schedules	3. Providing social events at work
4. Supporting healthy lifestyle like tobacco cessation services, nutrition counselling, physical activity		4. Staff kindergarten and day-care facilities
5. Offering occupational health services like vaccination, infection prevention,		5. Aligning opening and closing times of shops and banks in the hospital campus and vicinity to suit

- personal protection aids etc
- 6. Enabling risk reduction at workplace
- 7. Providing comfortable staff quarters

staff free time

C. Changing Hospital Organization to Promote Health

1. Hospital policies for health promotion
2. Health promotion projects
3. Hospital information systems
4. Adding units for prevention, health education and promotion, occupational health
5. Monitoring and evaluation of health promotion outcomes and impact
6. Regular health promotion information and involvement of staff and leadership
7. Health promotion education and training for staff and leadership
8. Involvement in healthy alliances and partnerships with other partners in local community

D. Community Health Needs

1. Providing clear information about the hospital, services and timings
 2. Information about hospital admission for health service providers in the community
 3. Develop standards for admission and discharge
 4. Improve information flow between hospital and other levels of care
 5. Develop policies and networks for continuity of care and follow up
 6. Reduce environmental risk to the community through hospital waste, plastics
 7. Promote traffic safety around the hospital
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INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITALS

The International Network of Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH) acts as a network of networks linking all national/regional networks. In total, it consists of 38 National / Regional HPH Networks, collaborating to reorient health care towards active promotion of health. Each of the National / Regional HPH Networks consists of a minimum of 3 hospital and health service members. Furthermore, about 50 hospitals and health services are individual HPH members of the International Network, since they are positioned in places yet without a National / Regional Network. In total, the International HPH Network is made up of more than 800 hospital and health service members in more than 40 countries. It supports the exchange of ideas and strategies implemented in different cultures and health care systems, developing knowledge on strategic issues and enlarging the vision⁶.

Although a lot of progress has been made in the last decade, the idea of health promotion has only slowly been introduced to hospitals. Perhaps one of the main factors explaining this was the lack of clear strategies and tools for implementation. The knowledge, tools and experience is available from developed countries which can serve as a guide for developing frame

work for developing HPH after adaptation⁷. There is now much better and stronger evidence for many health promotion interventions directed at patients, staff and the community.

HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITALS IN INDIA - WAY FORWARD

Health promoting hospital concept in India is very new and till date, only three hospitals are at various stages of being developed as HPH. The centres are JIPMER, Puducherry, SGPGI, Lucknow, and VMMCH, New Delhi. The first two centres have developed themselves into HPH where as the third one is in the process. These are demonstration projects funded by the World Health Organisation, Country Office for India.^{8,9} Each of these hospitals can take this noble concept to other hospitals in neighboring state medical colleges and district hospitals and should try to become a part of the global health promoting network. However this initiative should evolve from the project mode to the programme mode. Currently India is home to 610 district hospitals, 256 medical colleges¹⁰ teaching MBBS degree in India. If we could convert all these district hospitals and medical colleges to HPH, we will be able to improve the health of people who are seeking care, their relatives, community members and the staff

working in these centers. One must realize that we are already late!!!

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