

## **Approaches to Community Health**

At present, one can organize the community health science literature into three dominant approaches.

**1. Social Pathways Model:** The oldest and most widely practiced approach is the social pathways model. This model takes a nomothetic position, seeking to determine how a small set of social factors impacts the health of a community. In this model, community is also treated as a dependent (or grouping) variable.

**2. Community as Context Model:** This more recent approach emerged during the 1990s and has remained very hot! In this model, community context is treated as an independent variable, separate from the contribution of various other social factors--income, educational level, family health behaviors, etc. This approach to studying communities is a top-down model.

**3. Community as a Complex System:** The last model is the newest and least practiced. It views communities as complex systems; and takes a bottom-up approach to modeling.

Obviously, the limitations of the first two models are challenges that a complexity science approach to communities can handle. It can handle these challenges because this third approach has a complex view of communities as systems--that is, it sees the link between the micro and macro; has the tools to study system-level, emergent behavior; and has the ability to frame how environmental forces and the larger systems within which communities are situated impacts their respective health. Its bottom-up approach also allows it to see communities as both independent and dependent variables (via the concept of feedback loop). And, its bottom-up approach allows it to see communities as both context and composite--in other words, it does not construct a false dichotomy between community and other social (individual-level) factors such as income, education, etc.

# **COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING APPROACHES**

To accomplish community health goals and its aims the following approaches are to be utilized(used) by community health professionals:-

1)persuasive approach(acceptable)

2)enforcement

3)team approach

4)community involvement

5)Intersectorial approach

**1) PERSUASIVE APPROACH :** The persuasive approach implies convincing people through dialogue and educate them to change or modify their health behaviour.community health nurse make use of this approach in all types of nursing interventions related to health promotion and specific protection,early recognition,diagnosis and treatment and disability limitation and rehabilitation.it is through education that self care competencies of individual,family and community can be developed which is essential to acheive the goal of health for all.

**2) ENFORCEMENT APPROACH:** The enforcement implies the use of more coercive (obligatory) measures such as use of legislation e.g. prohibition of drug abuse ,child abuse, immunization as a condition to school admission etc. and the use of authority e.g. giving strict instructions or orders to do certain things especially when it is a question of life and death during emergency situations such as child labor, acute bronchopneumonia etc. Community health nurses make use of such measures in life threatening emergency situations.

**3)TEAM APPROACH :**Community health is a problem solving process and a team approach is very necessary to deal with varied and complex health needs & problems at large. It is just not possible for any one profession or discipline to provide such care. community health nursing is one of the professions & community health nurses along with auxiliary nurses and female health supervisors help to meet nursing needs

of the community as a whole. other members of the team who are usually there include physicians, clinical specialists, public health engineers, health statisticians, epidemiologists, health educationalists, counselors, social workers, clinical psychologists, pharmacologists, lab technicians, village health workers..community health nurses working in the community health settings needs to identify the health teams and their roles, functions and team dynamics so as to participate effectively in providing compressive health care services to people in the community & accomplish community health goals and aims.

**4) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT APPROACH:**Health of the individuals living in a defined community is not only their right but also their responsibility to take care of their own health & of the community at large. Without people's help ,participation or cooperation, it is neither possible to make health care services accessible & acceptable to them nor it is feasible to achieve community health goals and aims. community involvement & participation is recognized as one of the crucial supportive approach for successful implementation of community health care services. But it is all the more important for the primary health care component which is given greatest emphasis at the grass root level. The extent of community involvement may vary from one community to another. It may depend upon their socio economic &cultural aspects ,health attitude, health knowledge etc. It ranges from true or active participation(i.e people are knowledgeable & have a positive attitude & get involved in planning & implementing their health care)to passive recipient of care provided i.e the major responsibility of community involvement lies with health personnel who directly deal with people at the community level. They need to encourage and promote them for their participation. Community health nurse working with individuals, families, groups within the community as a whole for community health nursing services need to mobilize, encourage, organize & prepare them to take greater interest & responsibilities, develop self reliance for their own health matters.

**5)INTERSECTORIAL APPROACH :** Health of people at large cannot be attained by health sector alone because there are many factors which affect people's health but they are not under the purview of the

health sector e.g food production and distribution, water, sanitation, housing, environmental protection and education etc. each one is dealt by separate sector and socio economic development & health. it is felt necessary to have proper coordination between the health & all other sectors concerned at all levels. Health workers including community health nurses working at the grass root level for primary health care need to identify these sectors and coordinate with them to provide desired services which serve as entry points for the development & implementation for primary care services. community health nurses can also educate on: nutritional status of the family, food storage through programmes in the agriculture & health economics, proper use & maintenance of houses & the areas surrounding them through respective programs etc.

### **EPIDEMIOLOGICAL APPROACH :**

Epidemiological analysis & measurement allow researchers to measure health status & measurement of disease occurrences in a population. Surveillance of disease yields epidemiological intelligence data by providing systematic count of disease frequency. these data can be in turn used to estimate the magnitude (size or amount) of health problems in the community, detect epidemics & understand natural history of a disease or detect potential emerging infectious disease threats. Another use of this approach is case finding to identify health status of people who are at risk.