9 Community orientation

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Community orientation includes the ability:

- To reconcile the health needs of individual patients and the health needs of the community in which they live in balance with available resources.

9.1 Introduction

Family doctors have a responsibility for the community in which they work, which extends beyond the consultation with an individual patient. The work of the family doctor is determined by the makeup of the community and therefore the doctor must understand the potentials and limitations of the community. The family doctor is in a position where he/she can see these issues. In all societies health care systems are being rationed. Doctors are being involved in the rationing decisions, and have an ethical and moral responsibility to influence health policy in the community.

9.2 Assessment methods

- Records review to review achievement against target;
- Records review to assess procedures to address needs of the absent residents;
- Case report, case description;
- Observation of doctor and team in action.

Who could assess?

- Self assessment, internal audit;
- External audit – review of process through peer appraisal.

9.3 Documentation tools

- Check lists;
- Observation lists;
- Consultation maps.

9.4 Ability

Ability: *To reconcile the health needs of individual patients and the health needs of the community in which they live in balance with available resources.*

Case vignette.

The primary health care team arrives at the nursing home of 42 residents to perform flu vaccinations. Three residents are in outpatient clinic and want the immunization; others get the vaccination, except two residents who do not like vaccination as they are afraid of needles. The GP demonstrates her community orientation by assessing the needs of the small nursing home community as compared to the needs of these two residents, including their health needs, but also their personal preferences. The decision of the doctor should be aimed at persuading those two persons to agree with the vaccination, as it affects not only them, but also increases the risk of disease and also complications for other residents, who may be severely ill. This aim should be balanced with respecting the two patients' individual autonomy. The plan of the team is to return the next day for vaccination of the missing three residents.

How do GPs demonstrate this ability? (case vignette)	Features of this ability	Assessment method	Who could assess?
All residents in a nursing home should get annual flu vaccination unless contraindicated by EbM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organization• Administration• Collaboration with nursing home health care providers• Record keeping• Goal: to immunize 100% of eligible nursing home inhabitants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record review• System review• Case report• Case description• Observation of doctor in action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self assessment• Internal audit• External audit

Table 19: To reconcile the health needs of individual patients and the health needs of the community in which they live in balance with available resources