

Health Services Act needed to ensure quality of care

DHIRAJ KUMAR NATH

With the remarkable success of achieving the targets of Millennium Development Goals and government commitments to attain the targets of Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, there are efforts to improve the quality of services with the expansion of coverage of service delivery in the health sector. Unfortunately, quality of health care services could not yet earn people's confidence although investment increased significantly and enough initiatives taken to overcome impediments.

Major challenge at present is to ensure quality of services and provide services to all irrespective of urban or rural divide and poor and rich. In spite of large investment in building infrastructure, recruitment of huge numbers of staffs including 6,000 of additional nurses and other service providers and procurement of medical equipment, there are wide scale allegations about the quality of services that remained poor and unsatisfactory. The common perception is that quality of services and efficiency of service providers and expertise of doctors must improve to gain the confidence of public at large.



PHOTO: TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

Patients, having the ability are going abroad for treatment even for minor ailment.

In view of such a crisis of efforts and realities, the Law Commission is thinking to formulate a law regulating quality health care services to ensure health rights and bring health services providers under certain rules to enforce the discipline. The idea is to establish a National Health Commission and start some tribunals to mitigate contradiction and difference between doctors and patients, management and hospital authorities and create an environment of accountability and transparency in the health care delivery system.

According to an authentic source from Law Commission, a draft containing 69 clauses is under preparation for submission to the government for consideration. The proposed law will contain the rights of patients to choose the doctor, hospital or clinic must have mortality, clinical and morbidity audit to ensure accountability.

There will be some provisions to maintain transparency of pathological tests, uniformity of

charges and mandatory referral system. There are ideas of introducing Government Practitioner (GP) system in urban areas to ensure quick dispense of health care services.

The available infrastructure to provide health care services is quite satisfactory and sufficient to address emergency care. From the grassroots to tertiary level, health care services facilities are available throughout the country. The community clinic concept for 6,000 population gained momentum and 13,732 community clinics are functional at present.

The perception of public about the health care services yet a major issue to address. Hospital and clinic management has not developed as friendly and homely where patients and attendants suffer from tension and crisis of proper advices.

In order to properly address all these issues and critical areas to improve, public at large feel the need of Health Services Act to formulate and enforce that might help sustainability in due course.

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HEALTH EVENTS

Blood donors honoured by Quantum Foundation

Quantum Foundation honoured the voluntary blood donors by awarding them in a formal ceremony held recently in the National Press Club auditorium, says a press release.

Chief Guest of the ceremony, honourable Minister of the Health and Family Welfare Ministry Mohammad Nasim MP spoke on the occasion. He congratulated the foundation and thanked voluntary blood donors for their contribution in ensuring safe blood transfusion.

Improving health and nutritional status of the urban extreme poor

Concern Worldwide signed a partnership grant contract with its consortium partner BRAC for implementation of a project "Improving Health and Nutrition status of Urban Extreme Poor in Bangladesh through sustainable health service provision" recently, says a press release.

It is a three years project funded by the European Union and will be implemented in Dhaka North and South City Corporation, Chittagong City Corporation and Mymensingh Municipality.

The overall objective of the project is to improve the health and nutritional status of the urban extreme poor in Bangladesh through sustainable service provision managed through a coordinated, national urban health delivery system and the specific objective is to improve and increase sustainable, comprehensive and integrated primary health care, nutrition and population services to the urban poor.



Dr AKM Musha (R), Country Director, Concern Worldwide and Dr Muhammad Musa, Executive Director, BRAC signed the contract.

Seminar on 'Recent Advances in Cardiac Surgery'

AFC Health Fortis Escorts Heart Institute Khulna and Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) Khulna jointly organised a scientific seminar on 'Recent Advances in Cardiac Surgery' in Khulna Club recently.

Dr Ramji Mehrotra, Director of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery, Fortis Escorts Delhi talked about recent techniques of cardiac surgery.



HEALTH bulletin



Increased risk of poor outcomes for babies born to mothers with GDM

A new research published in Diabetologia (the journal of the European Association for the Study of the Diabetes [EASD]) shows an increased risk of adverse outcomes in babies born to mothers with gestational diabetes, when compared to non-diabetic mothers, according to The Lancet.

The proportion of women who are overweight or obese is increasing in almost all countries worldwide, and this is being accompanied by an increased risk of developing both type 2 diabetes (T2D) (whether pregnant or not) and gestational diabetes (GDM), a particular form of diabetes experienced only during pregnancy.

The researchers concluded: "We have clearly demonstrated that GDM is a disease related to adverse pregnancy outcomes and that most of the risks are higher in women with insulin-treated GDM. By restricting analysis to deliveries after 37 weeks and excluding cases of type 2 diabetes that were undiagnosed before pregnancy, we identified a moderate increase in risk of death to the newborn baby in women with GDM treated with diet only."

Workshops on USG at DMCH

DR KANIZ HASINA SHELIL

Some Bangladeshi American second generation physicians are following the footsteps of their predecessor in supporting health care and education in Bangladesh. Intensive care unit and emergency departments are urgent care facilities in any hospital. The working physicians are needed to be equipped with all the knowledge and technology to provide the best care to all critically ill patients during the first few golden hours of admission.

Dr Nahreen Ahmed, MD, MPH, a US born Bangladeshi American Physician, also a pulmonary and critical care fellow of New York Medical College has organised multiple training workshops on point of care ultrasonogram.

This workshop provided knowledge on how to use hand held ultrasound device to diagnose and treat critically ill patients without wasting valuable time.

The workshop took place in Dhaka Medical College and included around 80 critical care physicians and emergency room physicians from different hospitals of Dhaka.

Dr Syeda Hasan, another emergency medicine physician from New York's Mount Sinai Medical Centre also joined as one of the trainer.

Dr Nahreen Ahmed did a clinical rotation at Dhaka Medical College few years ago when she was a student of Drexel University Medical College in Philadelphia. During her medical residency at University of Illinois, Chicago she went to multiple developing countries in South

America to set up better health care service and technology for deserving communities. She is interested in global health and especially felt committed to Bangladesh after seeing her father Professor Ziauddin Ahmed's (Professor of Nephrology at Drexel University, Philadelphia) extensive involvement in an attempt to improve medical education in Bangladesh.

She is also very proud of and inspired by her grandfather Shaheed Professor Shamsuddin Ahmed FRCS, head of the Department of Surgery who was killed by Pakistani Army in the Sylhet Medical College Hospital on 9th April, 1971. He sacrificed his life when he was treating the patients in the middle of the war instead of fleeing for his life. Shaheed Prof Shamsuddin Ahmed was also the founding secretary of East Pakistan Medical Association and was involved in many humanitarian and professional activities to improve health care and community services during his short life time.

Dr Nahreen is very encouraged and grateful by the support they have been receiving and are very committed to expand their support in future. She is thankful to her team, the organisers, trainees, and especially to chief coordinator of the workshop Professor Abdul Hanif Tablu and Col (rttd) A Salam Bir Protik for providing all the support.

The writer is an Associate Professor, Department of Paediatric Surgery, Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others.

Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. If you are autistic, you are autistic for life; autism is not an illness or disease and cannot be 'cured'. Often people feel being autistic is a fundamental aspect of their identity.

How do autistic people see the world?

Some autistic people say the world feels overwhelming and this can cause them considerable anxiety.

In particular, understanding and relating to other people, and taking part in everyday family, school, work and social life, can be harder. Other people appear to know, intuitively, how to communicate and interact with each other, yet can also struggle to build rapport with autistic people. Autistic people may wonder why they are 'different' and feel their social differences mean people don't understand them.

How you can help?

You can help autistic people and their families by:

- Spreading understanding about autism - sign up to support our Too Much Information campaign
- Donating so we can continue to give millions of people information and advice about support
- Volunteering in one of our schools, care services or offices
- Fundraising for us.