

Community Based Rehabilitation

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Abstract

CBR is aimed at improving the quality of life of people with disability. It is a multi-sectoral strategy that empower person with disability to assess and benefit from education, employment, health and social services.

Keywords: Rehabilitation; Disability; Quality of Life; Multi-Sectoral Strategy; Community Awareness Counseling; Self Actualization; Communication.

Rehabilitation includes all measures aimed at reducing the impact of disability for an individual, enabling him or her to achieve independence, social integration, a better quality of life and self – actualization. Rehabilitation can no longer be seen as a product to be dispensed; rather rehabilitation should be offered as a process in which all participants are actively and closely involved.

Community based rehabilitation is a strategy within general community development for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities and social inclusion of all people with disabilities. The primary objective of CBR is the improvement of the quality of life of people with disability / marginalized persons. Key principles relating to CBR are equality, social justice, solidarity, integration and dignity. CBR is not an approach that only focuses on the physical or medical needs of a person or delivering care to disabled people as passive recipients. It is not outreach from a centre. It is not determined by the needs of an institution or groups of professionals, neither it is segregated and separate from services for other people.

Components of CBR

- Creation of a positive attitude towards people with

disabilities

- Provision of rehabilitation services
- Provision of education and training opportunities
- Creation of micro and macro income – generation opportunities
- Provision of long term care facilities
- Prevention of causes of disabilities
- Monitoring & Evaluation.

Initiatives for CBR

- Social counseling
- Training in mobility and daily living skills
- Providing or facilitating access to loans
- Community awareness raising
- Providing or facilitating vocational training/ apprenticeships
- Facilitating information for local self-help groups, parents groups and
- Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs)
- Facilitating contacts with different authorities
- Facilitating school enrolment (school fees and contacts with teachers/)

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CBR Personnel

1. CBR workers are gross root workers delivering services in a community
2. Supervisors or medico social workers who organize and support gross root workers
3. Professionals such as surgeon, physiotherapist, vocational trainers, counselors to whom referrals can be made from the community.

*Approaches of CBR**Social Mobilization*

Social mobilization means to bring people and resources together to achieve a particular task. It is necessary to promote the inclusion people with disability into all aspects of society. The purpose of social mobilization is to get disability into the social consciousness of the community and integrate the disability issue into all development programs. Political & economic approach is most powerful, it influences local economic and cultural life. Every decision made by political leaders affects local people. Society is to be involved in problem solving by understanding 'cause and effect'. Changing the policies which causes the pattern of exclusion may result in a wider and more long term effect

Political Participation

Political participation means people using their power as citizens to take part in and shape the decisions that affect their lives. This means being involved in government at local, regional and national levels, and playing an active part in politics parties, choosing representatives and voting. It included contesting elections and standing as representatives, and forming, shaping and implementing policies. It also means being active from outside the political structures by pressuring, persuading and lobbying to ensure representatives take the interest of people with disabilities seriously.

Communication and Language

Communication is a two way process that is important in every one's life. Communication is an essential part of social, cognitive and emotional growth. As such, it is a key element in the process of empowerment and underpins inclusion and equal rights. Communication is a basic human need. Communication is basic human right. Talking with others, listening to others, expressing our wants, emotions, opinions connects us to our family and

community. Impairments of various sorts can hamper both verbal and non verbal communication. The CBR program plays a key role in working with people with disabilities to improve their ability to express themselves and to engage with others. Sometimes the assistive solutions are simple, sometimes more technical and sophisticated. Communication is not straight forward. Our relationship with the other person, feeling intimidated, having less status, being stereotyped, being left out and ignored, feeling small because the other person talks in incomprehensible jargon, having our wishes pre-empted rather than being asked- all these factors are just as important as more obvious factors such as hearing or speech

Self-Help Groups (SHGS)

Enable people with disabilities to form Self-help Groups to advocate for themselves and to take responsibility for their own development. In CBR programs, the outcomes for SHGs are:

- Increased visibility of group members within the community;
- Stronger support for individual group members;
- Better solving of group problems;
- Enhanced mainstreaming of disability issues into development projects;
- Increased sense of group identity among the group members and of the group within the community;
- Members becoming a resource to the community, for example as bookkeepers, rehabilitation workers and facilitators.

Self-help Groups Work to these Values

- Mutual respect, and an understanding that everyone knows something and there is no one who knows nothing;
- A recognition of the strengths of the weakest and poorest members;
- The participation of people with severe and multiple disabilities;
- The equal participation of women with disabilities.
- Leadership from amongst the weakest sections of the group.

Disabled People's Organization (DPO)

They are membership organizations. Initially a few people with disabilities come together and form a

group. They work to increase membership and draw up a constitution. They register as a legal entity. The membership becomes the General Body of the organization. The General Body elects a Governing Body.

The Governing Body elects office bearers. The General Body meetings are conducted every one or three years. The function of the General Body is to elect the Governing Body, to approve the annual report and financial statements of the organization and also to make amendments to the constitution. The Governing Body is accountable and responsible for conducting the affairs of the organization. The office-bearers include president, secretary and treasurer.

They are the legal holders of the organization. The Governing Body employs staff to implement its policies and programs. The DPO is also accountable to its members and to other constituencies such as donors, staff and volunteers, service providers, and statutory bodies such as government agencies. DPOs are bigger and more structured version of SHGs. DPOs focus more widely on influencing policy and resource allocation. By working together, SHGs and DPOs are able to meet the needs of people with disabilities at the local and wider level, and in the short and long-term. The CBR program achieves its objectives largely through these groups.

Steps In Implementation of CBR

- I. Identification of person requiring rehabilitation services.
- II. Assessment of disabilities and various needs for rehabilitation of identified person.
- III. Provide the basic services through PHC, such as drugs, dressing materials, protective footwear, counseling and training in self care.
- IV. Introduce / escort the person to 'Village Health & Sanitation Committee' along with his/her problems or issues.
- V. Refer him/her to secondary or tertiary care center for physical rehabilitation services, like ulcer care, physiotherapy, surgical treatment, treatment of eye complications, prostheses and so on. Follow up of referral services is also an essential task.
- VI. Facilitating the accessibility to 'socio-economic rehabilitation services' through social welfare department by a 'CBR worker'. A health supervisor, MPW, ANM, AWW, ASHA, or even a volunteer can play the role of CBR -worker. Joint efforts by 'Village health & sanitation

committee' will be often required.

- VII. Review meetings by all stake holders, to discuss the progress of CBR project or individual's problems will help in expediting the rehabilitation.
- VIII. District Nucleus steers the rehabilitation activities and provides support to CBR workers in facilitating the accessibility to different services IX. Coordination with social welfare department and working jointly.
- X. Education of people, behavioral change communication and all effort to reduce stigma need to be carried out simultaneously and jointly so that rehabilitation activities can be carried out smoothly.
- XI. Participatory Evaluation of CBR services/ projects at definite intervals will open the avenues of effective and sustainable rehabilitation

Review of Literature

It gives an overview of the current research on CBR which can be found in the public domain. A brief background to the concept of CBR is given. It is shown how much of this published research reflects the fundamental principles of CBR service delivery, technology transfer, community involvement. The research conducted that, there is still a need for additional research at evolution in the extensive field of CBR.

A longitudinal study was conducted to compare CBR with out-patient care (OPC) for schizophrenia in a resource poor setting in India. All together, 207 participants entered the study, 127 in the CBR group & 80 in the OPC group. Among the 117 fully complaint participants the CBR Model was more effective in reducing disability, especially in men. The study conducted that the CBR model is a feasible method of care of chronic schizophrenia in a resource poor setting.

Conclusion

Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) focuses on enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families; meeting basic needs; and ensuring inclusion and participation. It is a multi-sectoral strategy that empowers persons with disabilities to access and benefit from education, employment, health and social services.

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