REFERRAL SYSTEM

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INTRODUCTION

Referral system is an essential component of health care system. From rural level to metropolises and from health sub-centres to specialist hospitals ,all kinds of health facilities can be provided to the community through this system .

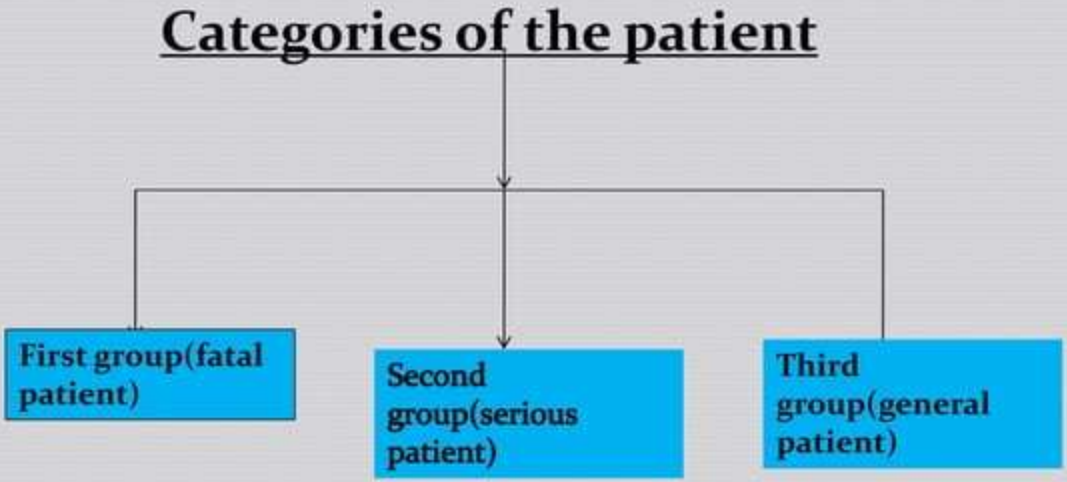
DEFINITION

The system in which the patient is sent from health care having fewer amenities to the health.
Institution or treatment centres which has more resources facilities and amenities, is called as *REFERRAL SYSTEM.*

PURPOSES

- To reduce the mortality and morbidity rate.
- To improve basic environmental sanitation.
- To increase the life expectancy of the individual.
- To improve the nutritional status.
- To develop man power and other resources.

SELECTION OF THE PATIENT FOR REFERRAL



FIRST GROUP OR FATAL PATIENTS

- Such patient cannot survive despite the best treatment made available for them. It is essential for relatives of the patient to understand that owing to his fatal condition it will not be beneficial to send the patient for referral

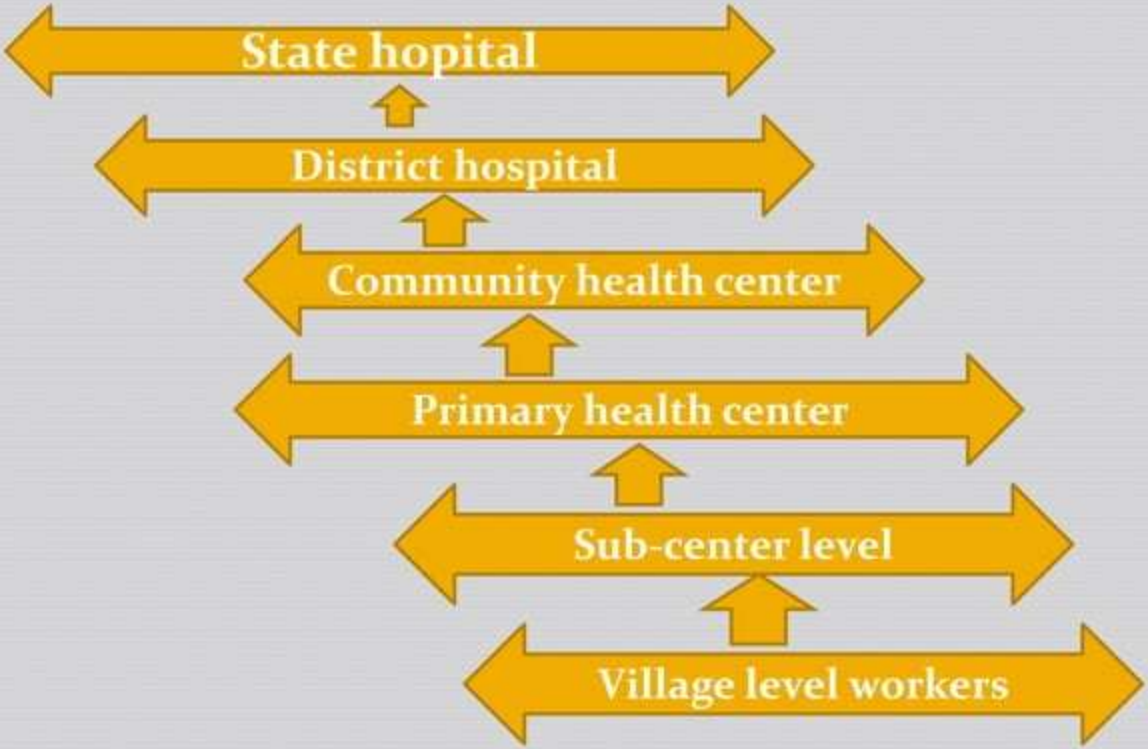
SECOND GROUP OR SERIOUS PATIENT

Condition of such patients is considered as serious but immediate treatment can save their lives, so before sending them for referral , attempts should be made to reduce the seriousness of the condition and only after that should send for referral

THIRD GROUP OR GENERAL PATIENTS

- Though this diseases may be serious in such patients still the condition of the patient is found to be normal. Delayed treatment may not threaten his life, such patients can be immediately send for referral .
- Thus on the basis of patient's condition, type of illness, objectives and the latest technique of treatment or the need of diagnosis, the case of the patient can be prepared for referral system.

LEVELS OF REFERRAL SYSTEM



NEED FOR URGENT REFERRAL

- *Severe pain in part of the body*
- *Stiff neck ,stiff jaw with arched back*
- *Haematemesis*
- *Pain in abdomen, frequent vomiting*
- *Black coloured stool*
- *Complicated deliveries*
- *Coma*
- *Severe diarrhoea*
- *Severe cyanosis*
- *Chest pain in heart patient*
- *Multiple trauma*

IMPORTANCE

- For early diagnosis and treatment of the case under the specialist care
- Cost effective system
- Reduces the duration of stay of the patient in hospital
- Limits the progress of the disease
- Prevents complication by starting appropriate timely care
- Teaching the nursing personnel for reviewing of the patient send for referral

❖ In referral system chain , the patient can be referred from the village level by village health guide to sub- centre level . From sub- canter they are referred to PHC . From PHC they are referred to CHC. From CHC they are referred to speciality hospital .

FUNCTIONS OF FIRST REFERRAL UNIT

Any unit which has got 24 hour services for emergency obstetric and new born care in addition to all routine emergency care and blood stores facility is called as first referral unit (FRU) .

Community Health Centre is called as first referral unit (FRU) .

❑ FUNCTIONS :-

- Surgical function
- Medical treatment function
- Blood transfusion function
- Manual functioning
- Anaesthetic function
- Obstetric and neonatal care function

PREPARATION OF THE CASE TO BE REFERRED

- Patient and his family members are explained about the condition of the patient and need for referring to the next unit. Once the doctor has written the orders for referring, the referring form is filled and signed by the referring doctor. Patient's valuable and other belonging are handed over to the relatives. No dues are cleared by the patient. All medical, documents, investigation reports, X-RAY,ECG etc. Are kept ready to set along with patient.

SHIFTING OF THE CASES TO THE NEXT REFERRAL UNIT

- After getting all the documents ready the next referral unit is informed telephonically briefing about the condition of the patient, reason for referring so that before the patient could reach bed is made ready with all the emergency equipment and drugs made available at the bed side and the concerned specialist to be informed about the time of arrival of the patient.
- the referral unit will arrange the ambulance. The nursing staff collects all the patient's documents, the referral form and other emergency drugs and the IV drips etc required on the way of according to the condition of the patient and the doctor's advice in cases required and after that the referral form to be filled and signed by the referring doctor.

REFERRAL FORM

All the units have printed referral form which is filled by the referring doctors with patient's particular brief history of case treatment given and reason for referring. A sample of Referral form is under :

REFERRAL FORM

NAME OF THE HEALTH CENTER / HOSPITAL.....
REFERRAL REG NO..... DATE.....
NAME OF THE PATIENT..... DATE AND TIME OF ADMISSION.....
GUARDIAN'S NAME.....
AGE..... SEX..... RELIGION..... OCCUPATIOIN.....
PERMANENT ADDRESS.....
TELEPHONE OF NEXT OF KIN.....
PRESENT DIAGNOSIS.....
CASE HISTORY IN BRIEF.....
DESCRIPTION OF TREATMENT.....
REASON FOR REFERRING.....
PAPERS: CASE FILE, ECG, X-RAY, INVESTIGATION REPORT

SEAL OF THE HEALTH CENTER

SIGN OF THE REFERRING DOCTOR

ROLE OF A NURSE IN REFERRAL SERVICE

- Inform the referring unit telephonically before shifting about the condition of the cases and treatment so that bed is readily available with all the emergency equipments at bed side and specialist is available to see the cases.
- Nurse should explain the patient and family for reasons of referring to secondary and tertiary level of health care.
- Nurse should check the condition of the patient whether he is fit to be shifted immediately or some emergency treatment is required.
- Collect all the document of the patient like case file, investigation reports, x-rays, ECG treatment chart, vital chart, intake output charts etc to be sent along with the patient.
- Check the referral form whether filled completely and signed by the referring doctor with brief history of the case.
- Patient's belonging and valuable to be handed over to the relatives.
- All the nursing personnel working in sub-centers primary health center, community health center and district hospital should have the referral system

SUMMERY

In public system health care, the health care services are provided at three levels. Primary level of health care is the setting of health care which provide first level of contact between the community and the health care at grass root level. At this level most of the health problems are solved with some guidance, education and assistance and treatment by the team of health personnel. This care is provided by the sub center and PHC, secondary level of care is provide by the CHC and district hospitals. And the tertiary level of care is provided by the state level multi-speciality hospitals .


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