

## Preventing Physical Impairment in Childhood

### CBM Strategy Overview

#### The Concept:

As much as 75% of disabling impairment in children in lower resource countries is preventable through awareness, primary health practice, early identification and early intervention.

It is recognized that our best way to implement prevention strategies is through community based programs and projects.

The focus is **the health domain of the cbr matrix**, emphasizing prevention of physical impairment in children, with components of prevention of childhood blindness, deafness, and intellectual impairment.

The CBM Prevention Strategy has 2 components, each with its own toolkit

#### The 2 components of the prevention strategy:

1. Primary Health
2. Neuro-developmental Delay and Cerebral Palsy: Home and community interventions

#### 1. Primary Health:

- Our community work should line up and reinforce the importance of primary health care in accordance with the World Health Report of 2008, "Primary Health Care: Now More Than Ever".
- It is recognized that there are many pre-existing initiatives within the public and primary health domain and many good publications. We have tried to identify those components important in prevention of impairment and disability and simplify them for community use.
- This package integrates CBM strategy with existing WHO – UNICEF policies and initiatives. We have desired not to "reinvent the wheel"! The UNICEF publication "*Facts for Life*", used extensively around the world is taken as the primary text and is available in very many languages.

- We have put the emphasis on prevention of disability, not just disease prevention strategy.

## **2. Neuro-developmental Delay and Cerebral Palsy: Home and community interventions**

- Conditions causing neuro-developmental delay, of which cerebral palsy is the most prevalent, constitute a very large burden of disabling impairment in children
- Early awareness and early intervention with stimulation programs forms the basis of care. Medical and surgical intervention plays only a small role and is seldom needed.
- Early intervention/stimulation programs are best applied in the home and community, not in health institutions.
- This toolkit focuses on parental and caregiver education as a basis for effective implementations in the home setting
- This module will be implemented by community rehabilitation workers and follows principles laid out in the Werner text, "*Disabled Village Children*", Chapter 9

CBM has developed these prevention "toolkits" intended for distribution and utilization in community programs.

### **The "Toolkits":**

The toolkits seek to encompass the following:

- Advocacy and awareness for prevention and early intervention
- Integration with existing primary health care initiatives
- Parental support information, notably neuro-developmental delay and cerebral palsy
- Encourage referral & treatment pathways

### **Each prevention toolkit has 3 tools:**

#### **1. Laminated flip charts**

- These are the main implementing tools in the prevention program, developed as A4 sized booklets which can be carried easily.

- They constitute the basic information a community rehabilitation worker needs to convey to caregivers, primary health providers and other appropriate user groups,
- They are primarily visually presented, taking into consideration audiences with limited literacy, with three or four bullet points per page for the community workers to reinforce.
- The drawings can also be printed on A1 sized flip charts.

## **2. A training manual**

- This is a more comprehensive document or booklet with background information on the impairments, prevention and treatment strategies. Intended for trainers and leaders.
- This is quite detailed but practical. It forms the curriculum used by teachers in schools of health providers, public health and community rehabilitation workers.
- The manual may also be used as an advocacy document with ministries of health and other civic authorities.

## **3. Individual fact sheets or pamphlets**

- These outline on just a few pages a specific impairment or strategy. They are intended for overview and quick reference by managers and others.

## **Translation**

- The flipcharts have been developed in *InDesign*, a desktop publishing program that makes for easy substitution of text. The master copy is produced in English.
- It is intended that the flipcharts be translated and printed in locally appropriate languages. Assistance for this will be provided by the Knowledge, Learning and Training (KLT) department of CBM.
- Community projects and regional program officers are responsible for translating the text into the local language in a WORD document using appropriate fonts.
- The translated text will be sent electronically to Global-Help.org, whom we have sub-contracted to insert the translated text into the master copy
- The language specific flipchart will then be returned to the authors as a .pdf document

## **Printing**

The pdf document can then be used by the RO or project to print and laminate the flip charts using locally available resources. In most instances it will be more cost-effective and practical to print the materials locally.

## **Standardization**

The toolkits seek to standardize prevention practices throughout the CBM family. They have been developed with great care by experienced professionals with a wealth of field experience. CBM partners are encouraged not to modify the factual information although it is understood that minor modifications for cultural sensitivity might be needed.

## **Distribution**

It is intended that:

- All Regional Offices have a complete set of the prevention toolkits. These are distributed by KLT.
- All partner CBR projects, community programs and appropriate CBM supported health facilities receive a complete toolkit
- The regional office program development officers encourage and support the distribution and printing of appropriate numbers of flipcharts to support their partner projects
- The prevention toolkits be made available to any agency or organization whose activities might help promote prevention of disability.

## **Other Prevention Initiatives**

A third flipchart toolkit has been developed focusing on structural birth impairments. This is not intended for implementation at community caregiver level, but is intended as a training tool for midwives, birth attendants, and other professional health personnel.

### **Structural Birth Impairments: Identification and early referral**

- Many structural birth impairments go unrecognized and untreated with subsequent disabling impairment

- This toolkit focuses on educating birth attendants and maternity units in early identification and referral
- Integrating this toolkit with maternal health programs is likely to be fruitful
- The laminated flip-chart contains photographs of specific structural impairments
- The emphasis is on immediate referral since many structural impairments can be cured or improved by early intervention, notably reconstructive surgery
- Maternity and other health workers are encouraged to identify appropriate referral pathways as part of the package

This package was developed specifically for CCBRT in association with the development of the Baobab Maternity Hospital. It is anticipated it may be used elsewhere in the CBM family where we are involved in the professional education of health workers, and in maternal and child health care initiatives.

In due course you will be invited for an Elluminate session to clarify issues and answer questions.

Best wishes



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Bensheim, May 2012