



ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMME AWARENESS AMONGST HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Hospital Administration

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ABSTRACT

The Government of India, has initiated a large number of Public Health Programmes under the ambit of National Health Mission, includes the Reproductive Maternal, Neonatal Child and Adolescents Health Programme (RMNCHA+), Health Systems Strengthening, Non-Communicable Disease Control Programme, Communicable Disease Control Programme, and Infrastructure Maintenance. A study was carried out amongst government health professionals including doctors and nurses on Public Awareness of the various initiatives, which is an essential aspect of full utilization. The study demonstrated that the senior health professionals scored an average of 3.67 points out of a maximum of 10, which reflects on the severe lack of awareness even amongst healthcare professionals.

KEYWORDS

Public health programmes, National health mission, Healthcare professionals

INTRODUCTION

The Government of India, has initiated a large number of Public Health Programmes under the ambit of National Health Mission and includes the following five pillars (1) :-

- Reproductive Maternal, Neonatal Child and Adolescents Health Programme (RMNCHA+)
- Health Systems Strengthening
- Non-Communicable Disease Control Programme
- Communicable Disease Control Programme
- Infrastructure Maintenance

However, the Public Awareness of the various initiatives, which is an essential aspect and key determinant of full utilization needs to be explored so that optimum strategies for Information, education and communication not just towards the clientele but for Healthcare Professionals along with their training can be implemented.

Any Public Policy or initiative is likely to be successful, if it is packaged, marketed and informed optimally not just to the users but also to the other healthcare professionals who may be involved in the implementation of such programmes.

Nuanced IEC campaigns targeting all stakeholders are therefore extremely important for fructification of any Policy initiative. All the National health programmes including RMNCHA+, various communicable disease control programmes, non communicable disease (NCD) control programmes, etc. Thus, the National Multisectoral Plan for Prevention and Control of Common NCDs talks about informed mass media campaigns to raise awareness on all aspects related to NCDs especially focusing on risk factor prevention conducted (2).

It also talks about Central NCD Division (CND) at headquarter can include experts on various thematic areas such as environment, policies, legislation, finance/ revenue, consumer protection, industrial coordination, nutrition, information technology, media communication inter alia. These experts can coordinate with the concerned ministries for various multisectoral actions (2). Almost every government/ national health programme gives emphasis on IEC activities and materials required therein are also provided, however, every segment of society and healthcare establishment needs to be targeted for full benefits of such programmes to materialize (3)

As the Health Professionals are the primary agents/ facilitators for full utilisation of services by the Public, it is important that they should be aware of all the nuances of the Public Health Programmes.

A study was conducted amongst Senior Health Professionals in the Government sector, to assess the awareness of various services and initiatives which the Government of India has undertaken/ provided under the RMNCHA+ programme.

OBJECTIVES.

The following objectives were framed for the study thus conducted :-

- To study the relevant literature about the various initiatives/ services for the Public under the RMNCHA+ programme.
- To conduct a study amongst Health Professionals about the awareness of such services.
- To analyse the data thus obtained and fwd recommendations if any.

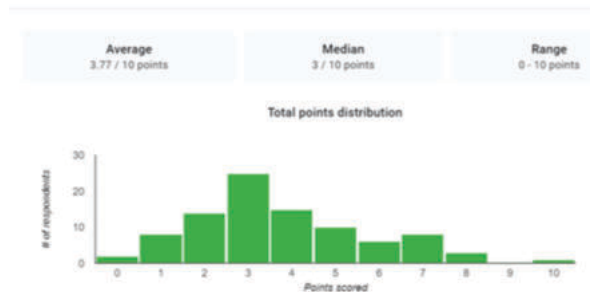
METHODOLOGY

It is a descriptive observational focussed group questionnaire-based study. A brief review of literature was done to assess the importance of IEC and Health Promotion activities advised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and methodology of providing the same. A questionnaire was created on a Google form and included 10 questions on simple aspects (not very technical aspects) and which are being widely followed in the Public Health Administration sphere. The questionnaire was thus developed circulated amongst senior health Professionals in the age group of 40 - 50 years with approximately 15 - 25 years of service and included specialists from diverse field such as Gynecologists, Obstetricians, Pediatricians, Public Health Professionals, medical officers and healthcare administrators. The Google form was circulated through social media platforms and Confidentiality was assured. The questions had 1 point given to each correct answer with a max of 10 points. A total of 92 responses were obtained. The observations obtained were analysed and discussed accordingly and certain recommendations given.

RESULTS

The following observations were arrived at and have been duly analysed as under: -

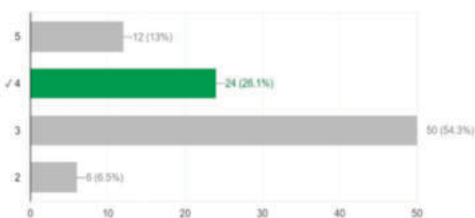
The average score per person was 3.77 amongst the 92 healthcare functionaries who responded as depicted in the graph No 1 below



Graph No 1: Pattern of Scores obtained

The first question asked was How many minimum numbers of mandatory Antenatal checkups as per RMNCHA+ programme, and the correct answer was four (4). The pattern answers received was depicted in the graph No 2 below: -

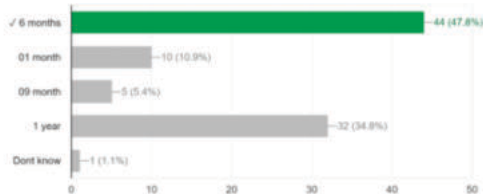
How many minimum number of mandatory Antenatal checkups as per RMNCHA+ programme
24 / 92 correct responses



Graph No 2: Response to Mandatory Antenatal Checkups

The second question asked was Till what time post delivery are the maternal healthcare interventions provided free of cost by the government and the correct answer is 06 months (4). The response to this question is as depicted in the graph below:-

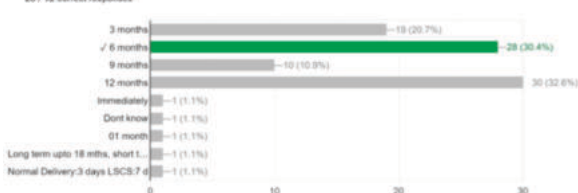
Till what time post delivery are the maternal healthcare interventions provided free of cost by the government
44 / 92 correct responses



Graph No 3: Response to Question on time post-delivery maternal healthcare interventions provided free of cost

The third question asked was Till what time after birth are the medicines and Laboratory investigations provided free of cost by GOI and the correct answer is again 06 months (4). The response to this question is as depicted in the graph below:-

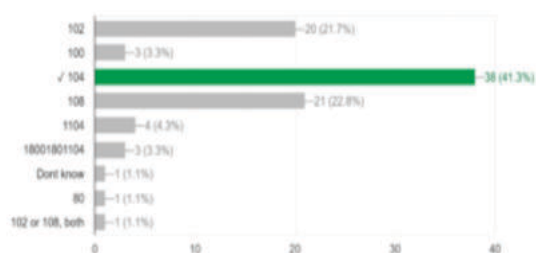
Till what time after birth are the medicines and Laboratory investigations provided free of cost by GOI
28 / 92 correct responses



Graph No 4: Response to Question on Time after birth Medicines and Lab Inv provided free of cost

The fourth question asked was What is the toll free number for grievance redressal mechanism for SUMAN programme and the correct answer was 104 (5) and the response to the question was depicted in the graph below:-

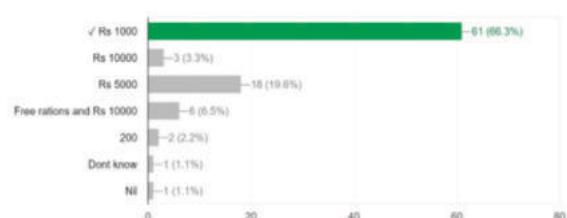
What is the toll free number for grievance redressal mechanism for SUMAN programme
38 / 92 correct responses



Graph No 5: Response to Question on Toll Free for Grievance Redressal Mechanism

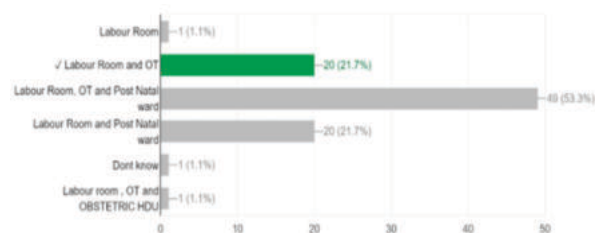
The fifth question asked was What is the incentive given to a person who is a first responder of maternal death and the correct answer was Rs 1000 (6) and the response to the question asked was as depicted in the graph below:-

What is the incentive given to a person who is a first responder of maternal death
61 / 92 correct responses



Graph No 6 : Response to Question on Incentive for First responder of Maternal Death

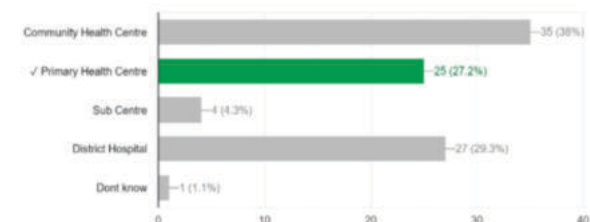
The sixth question asked was What departments of a healthcare institution covered under LaQSHYA certification and the correct answer was Labour room and OT (7) and the response to the question is as depicted in the graph below:-



Graph No 7: Response to Question on department covered under LaQSHYA certification

The seventh question asked was Where are the Adolescent Information and Counselling Centre provided by the GOI and the correct answer was Primary Health Centre (PHC) (7) and the response to the question is depicted in the Graph below:-

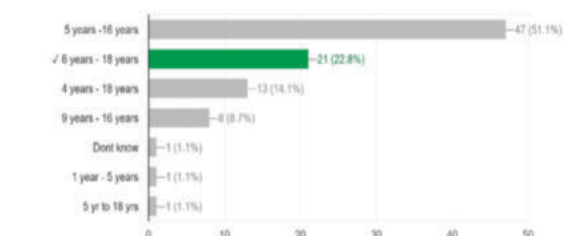
Where are the Adolescent Information and Counselling Centre provided by the GOI
25 / 92 correct responses



Graph No 8: Response to Question location of Adolescent Information and Counselling Centre

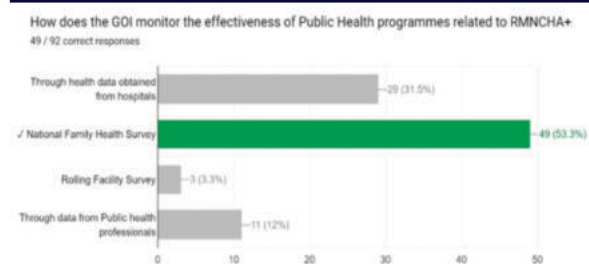
The eighth question asked was Bi-annual health screening of school going children is undertaken for what age group and the correct answer was 06 years to 18 years and the response to the question was depicted in the graph below:-

Bi-annual health screening of school going children is undertaken for what age group
21 / 92 correct responses



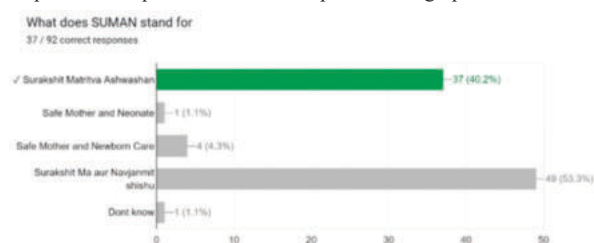
Graph No 9: Response to Question on Biannual Health Screening of Schoolgoing children

The ninth question asked was How does the GOI monitor the effectiveness of Public Health programmes related to RMNCHA+ and the correct answer was through National Family Health Survey (8) and the response to the question asked was depicted in the graph below:-



Graph No 10 : Response to Question on Mechanism of monitoring the effectiveness of Public Health programmes related to RMNCHA+

The tenth question asked was What does SUMAN stand for and the correct answer was Surakshit Matritva Ashwasan (5) and the response to the question asked was depicted in the graph below :-



Graph No 11: Response to Question on Full form of SUMAN

Analysis. As can be seen from the data as depicted above, the percentage of correct answers range from 61 (66.3%) to 21 (22.8 %) and the average mean score was 3.77 amongst senior healthcare professionals. It can be visualised from this that it is not a very healthy level of awareness. And the levels of awareness is likely to be further low amongst nurses and paramedics. The frequency of correct answers obtained are as shown in the table below: -

Question	Correct responses
How many minimum number of mandatory Antenatal checkups as per RMNCHA+ programme	24 / 92
Till what time post delivery are the maternal healthcare interventions provided free of cost by the government	44 / 92
Till what time after birth are the medicines and Laboratory investigations provided free of cost by GOI	25 / 92
What is the toll free number for grievance redressal mechanism for SUMAN programme	38 / 92
What departments of a healthcare institution covered under LaQSHYA certification	20 / 92
Where are the Adolescent Information and Counselling Centre provided by the GOI	25 / 92
Bi-annual health screening of school going children is undertaken for what age group	21 / 92
What does SUMAN stand for	37 / 92

CONCLUSION

Despite the good intentions and monumental steps, the RMNCHA+ programme can succeed only if its nuances are known by all. The Public Health Initiatives especially as regards RMNCHA+ activities are indeed a great step in the right directions and phenomenal work is being done in all spheres, however, it is important that at least all healthcare functionaries including doctors, nurses and paramedics are imparted sufficient awareness and knowledge of various activities being conducted. Although, one can argue that all healthcare workers may not be involved in RMNCHA+ activities, however, what the ibid study wanted to bring to light was the gap in awareness about flagship programmes of the Government of India, which can succeed only if the all segments have sufficient awareness. If the healthcare functionaries are aware, they are likely to talk about it to the society and only then will all the benefits of the programme accrue.

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- National Family Health Survey, India; <https://rchiips.org/nfhs/>