

COMMITTEE 6: WORKSHOP ON TEACHING AND TRAINING

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Participants

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Prior to the workshop, it was agreed to focus on the selection, production, and distribution of books and pamphlets for leprosy control workers. There were four reasons for this:

1) Appropriate literature is still by far the most influential source of new information and ideas.

2) Books do not require any elaborate apparatus for their effective use.

3) Books are relatively cheap to produce and to distribute.

4) Really good and appropriate written learning material can make a great contribution to the effective training of the large numbers of health workers who will become responsible for leprosy patient care in integrated and in primary health care programs.

However, the participants of the workshop were also aware that much of the reading material available is not entirely appropriate and that distribution of appropriate literature is very patchy.

Aims. The aims of the workshop were: 1) to prepare a short list of current titles in English appropriate for various categories of health staff; 2) to identify gaps in existing literature in English; 3) to prepare similar lists of material available in languages other than English, especially in major international languages, and 4) to outline proposals for further development of effort to produce, distribute, and assess material for leprosy workers.

Proceedings. Based on previous work done primarily by INFOLEP in Amsterdam

and The Leprosy Mission (International) in London and the varied experience of the workshop participants, short lists of books in English appropriate for six broad categories of workers were prepared, and a number of important gaps and deficiencies in the literature were identified. Due to the limited time and the lack of full representation, it was decided not to attempt to do the same for other languages at this time.

The second day of the workshop was taken up with the presentation (by participants) of field experiences in the production, distribution, and utilization of learning materials in a variety of situations at the central and peripheral levels. This was followed by a sharing of AMREF experience in East Africa, in line with production and distribution of learning materials in the field of general health by Dr. Christopher Wood. Extensive and frank discussion intensified the exchange of information and ideas.

Conclusions. A great variety of literature exists in English and, with a few exceptions, can potentially meet the needs of most workers who can read that language with reasonable fluency. There are, however, three areas where improvement is essential: 1) Much of the existing literature could be made more useful by simplifying the language and improving presentation. 2) Distribution leaves much to be desired; many workers are not even aware of the existence of literature which could help them, and the present system for distribution of materials often fails to deliver literature to those who need it. 3) Many students and workers have

little or no skills in the use of literature as an aid to learning for basic or continuing formal or non-formal education.

It is apparent that there is a serious shortage of readily available material in languages other than English, especially for paramedical workers. The translation of existing English material is one way of coping with this situation. But translation of technical material is not easy and translations, even by experts in linguistics, should be checked for technical accuracy by people familiar with both the language and the subject matter.

Recommendations. The workshop makes the following recommendations:

1) The contribution of appropriate learning material to the competency and motivation of workers should be recognized, and funds for literature should be provided as an essential item in every leprosy control program.

2) Efforts to collect and to disseminate information about literature in languages other than English should continue.

3) Assessment and the subsequent improvement of existing material in English should, in general, have priority over the production of new material in that language.

4) Efforts to provide learning material for field workers in local languages should be intensified, since there is a notable lack of literature for this particular group.

5) Training in the use of written material should be an integral part of basic and refresher courses for all staff.

6) Effective distribution of literature, especially to staff at the periphery, is as important as the distribution of drugs and should be given similar priority.

The following teaching materials are available in print, on audio cassette tape, 35 mm slides in English, French and Spanish. Videotape includes Betamax and VHS formats and PAL and NTSC systems in English language only. Copies can be ordered from American Leprosy Missions, Inc., One Broadway, Elmwood Park, New Jersey 07407, U.S.A.

Immunology by T. Godal: New understandings of the immunology of leprosy and introduction to current terminology, techniques and concepts.

The Eye by M. Brand: The recognition and management of the ocular manifestation of leprosy.

Reactions by R. St. C. Barnetson: The recognition and management of reactive phenomena and of neuritis.

Nerve Damage and Rehabilitation by P. Brand: The pathophysiology of nerve damage and deformity and the clinical management of disability and anesthetic limbs.

Epidemiology and Control by M. F. Lechat: Approaches to leprosy control and therapy in the field, program planning, supervision, implementation, and evaluation.

Public Education by P. J. Neville: Education of the public and of patients in leprosy, principles, plans and practices.

Case Taking by K. Ramanujam: Clinical examination and smear taking leading to clinical description and diagnosis.

Classification by K. V. Desikan: The delineation of clinical and histological types in leprosy, using the new Indian classification.