

# Primary Health Care



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# Primary Health Care

This is a new approach to health care which came into existence in **1978**.

These services are **simple** and **efficient** with regard to:

- cost
- techniques
- organization



**to improve** the living conditions of **individuals**, **families** and the **community** as a whole.

**P.H.C. is defined as:**

**"essential health care based on:  
practical, scientifically sound and socially  
acceptable methods and technology made  
universally accessible to individuals and  
families in the community through their  
full participation and at a cost that the  
community and the country can afford".**

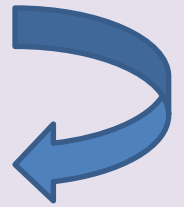


## Primary health care (P.H.C)

is available to **all people** at the first **level** of health care.

its the first level of **contact** of :  
**individuals, family** and **community**

with the **national health system** where  
essential health care is provided.



## P.H.C.

It was described as **a best approach** to achieve the goal of **HEALTH FOR ALL** by the year of **2000**, this means that the health is to be brought within the reach of every one in a given community .

**Health for all was defined** as the attainment of a level of health that will enable every individual to lead **a socially and economically productive life.**

**P.H.C.** involves effort to provide the **rural populations** of developing countries with at least the bare **minimum of health services.**

# Elements (components) of P.H.C. :-

- 1-Education concerning prevailing **health problems** and the methods of **preventing and controlling** them.
- 2-Promotion of **food supply** and **proper nutrition**
- 3-An adequate supply of **safe water** and basic **sanitation**.
- 4-**Maternal and child** health care, including family planning .

**5-Immunization against major infectious diseases**

**6-Prevention and control of locally endemic diseases.**

**7-Appropriate treatment of common diseases and injuries.**

**8-Provision of essential drugs.**

# Principles of primary health care:

## **1-Equitable distribution:**

Health services must be shared equally by all people irrespective of their ability to pay and all must have access to health services.


## **2-Community participation :**

Involvement of the community in the **planning, implementation and maintenance of health services,** besides maximum reliance on **local resources** such as **manpower ,money** and **materials.**





### **3-Focus on preventive and health promotion**

The focus of health planners must shift from medical/dental care  to prevention and health promotion.

### **4- Multisectoral co-ordination:**

P.H.C. involves in addition to the health sector ,all related sectors of the communitye.g.agriculture ,food industry ,education, housing and other sectors.

**Oral health** can be better integrated into **general health** programs by including oral health in general health education.

For example, smoking effects heart disease, respiratory disease and oral disease.

### **5- Appropriate technology:**

This refers to the technology that is scientifically **sound**, **adaptable** to the local needs and **acceptable** to those who apply it and those for whom it is used.

It refers to **avoid using of costly equipment**, procedures, techniques when cheaper scientifically valid and acceptable ones are available.

**Atraumatic restorative treatment technique offers treatment for caries at low cost where electricity is not available.**

## Primary dental health care:

Dental health may be defined as a state of **complete normality** and **functional efficiency** of the **teeth** and **supporting structures** and also of the **surrounding parts** of the oral cavity and of the various structures related to **mastication** and the **maxillofacial** complex.

## Community dental health services:

Are those dental health services which have an **educative**, **preventive** or **curative** nature which organized by governments.

## P.D.H.C. can be considered under four steps these are:

### 1-Socially:

The **community** itself must take the principle role in D.H.C. activities .

It is the responsibility of **dental profession** to teach the people that they should **not regard dentistry as simply the provision of services to relieve pain and restore function and appearance**



but they must be motivated to use preventive measures from birth to old age to keep their teeth in a healthy mouth.

The primary prevention level for oral health should comprise of **Oral Health Education** .

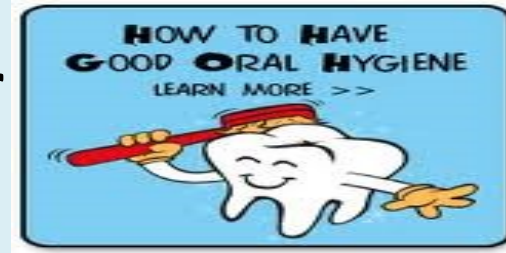
The lectures and audiovisual aids can be imparted to small groups of individuals in the community at regular intervals in different areas of **villages**.

## Each community must primarily be educated about:

-The benefits of **fluoride** in reducing dental caries.



-Various **oral hygiene measures** for removal of dental plaque.



-Correct **food habits** for children (restriction of eating sweet not more than three times a day and not between snacks).

-Harmful effects of habits such as **smoking**.

-Early recognition of **precancerous and cancerous** lesions

-The importance of **regular visits** to the dentist for routine examination.

## 2-Technically :

Oral health teams must enable both **dentist** and **auxiliaries** to guide their community population towards a desired level of **oral** and **general health** .

Dental schools in some countries produce dentists who are also able to render **primary oral health care**.

**Dentists or medical doctors** with appropriate oral health information should act as **leaders** of the whole health team.

### 3-Economically:

\* Those responsible for dental health care services must develop **systems which utilize the resources available** to provide **a level of dental health care for everyone** .

\* Many countries show that **a high** proportion of their dental health budget is spent on **a small** proportion of the population.



\* **A sound dental health program** must be **equally spread** over the entire population.



## 4-Politically:

Primary dental health care cannot be developed without the **full support of national resources** .

So to become a practical proposition every country must show the **political will** to examine its **health priorities** in relation to the **social needs** of its total population.