

Outreach Service for Children in Special Schools

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Introduction:

Children in special schools for the handicapped often suffer from multiple health care problems who require frequent medical consultation and follow up. However, their limited mobility with difficulty in transportation and multiple medical problems create a significant stress on the parents and school staff. A coordinated service with the community partner to enhance support to these children is required.

Purpose of the Project:

The outreach service aims to coordinate and support the care of the disabled children in the community. It provides training and empowerment of community health care workers on knowledge and skills, and also education of the parents.

Material & Methods:

A specialist delivered outreach service to the special schools and centres for the handicapped children in the Hong Kong East Region was commenced in November 1996. Outreach clinics in schools with CMS support are provided with involvement of parents, teachers, nurses and paramedics. Direct telephone consultations for health advice are also available.

Results:

Outreach clinics to 5 and telephone consultation to 8 special schools and centers are provided in 2006. The service obviates transportation for the patients and hence decreases demand on transportation needs and stress of patients and parents. A better communication between the medical team, parents and schools results in a decrease of consultation of the outpatient clinics and the Accident and Emergency Service. Survey shows positive feedbacks from the parents and schools.

Conclusions:

Outreach service to children in special schools for the handicapped provides a coordinated service with the community partners to improve the care of these children. It obviates the transportation needs and stress to the family and schools. A better communication between medical team, parents and schools results in less hospital consultation.