

Introduction to Community Based Health Care

Introduction to Community-Based Health Care (CBHC)
Key concepts, goals, components, and implementation steps

1. What Is Community-Based Health Care?

Aspect	Description
Definition	A health service model that delivers preventive, curative, and rehabilitative care within the community where people live, work, and socialize.
Core Idea	Health is a shared responsibility of individuals, families, local institutions, and the health system.
Scope	Includes health promotion, disease prevention, early detection, treatment of common conditions, chronic disease management, and referral to higher level facilities.
Contrast with Facility-Based Care	Facility-based care is centered on hospitals/clinics; CBHC shifts the point of care to the community, using local resources and personnel.

2. Why CBHC Matters

Reason	Impact
Accessibility	Reduces travel time, cost, and cultural barriers; reaches remote or underserved populations.
Equity	Targets gaps in health outcomes among marginalized groups.
Cost-Effectiveness	Preventive actions and early treatment lower expensive hospital admissions.
Empowerment	Builds community capacity to identify and solve its own health problems.
Resilience	Strengthens local response to epidemics, disasters, and chronic disease burdens.

3. Guiding Principles

Introduction to Community Based Health

Care

1. **People?Centered** – Services are designed around the needs, preferences, and cultural context of the community.
 2. **Participation & Ownership** – Community members actively plan, implement, and evaluate programs.
 3. **Integration** – Links primary care, public health, and social services across sectors.
 4. **Continuity & Coordination** – Seamless referral pathways between community agents and higher?level facilities.
 5. **Equity & Inclusiveness** – Prioritizes vulnerable groups (e.g., children, elderly, persons with disabilities).
 6. **Evidence?Based** – Uses data and research to guide interventions and monitor outcomes.
-

4. Key Components of a CBHC System

Component	Typical Activities
Community Health Workers (CHWs)	Home visits, health education, basic screening, medication adherence support, referral facilitation.
Health Promotion & Education	Nutrition counseling, hygiene campaigns, reproductive health talks, school?based programs.
Preventive Services	Immunizations, antenatal care, growth monitoring, vector?control, screening for hypertension/diabetes.
Basic Curative Care	Treatment of common infections, wound care, first?aid, provision of essential medicines.
Referral & Linkage	Protocols for escalating severe cases to clinics/hospitals; transport arrangements.
Data Collection & Surveillance	Community registers, disease reporting, use of mobile health (mHealth) tools.
Community Governance	Health committees, participatory budgeting, local policy advocacy.
Supportive Supervision	Regular training, mentorship, performance feedback for CHWs and volunteers.

5. Steps to Design and Implement CBHC

Introduction to Community Based Health Care

1. Community Assessment

- Demographic profile, health status, existing resources, cultural practices.
- Tools: household surveys, focus groups, GIS mapping.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

- Identify and involve local leaders, NGOs, faith groups, schools, and health authorities.
- Form a community health committee.

3. Define Goals & Priorities

- Align with national health plans and local burden of disease (e.g., maternal health