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Judging Dept.

Ghazwan Toma

Student

EPI/BIOSTAT

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Dr. Hussain Al-Mashhadani

Dept or Program Years in program

Mentor

Public Health Activities in a Primary Health Care Center

Author (s)

Ghazwan Toma, Dr. Louise Ann McNutt

Location: Al-Tarmiya primary health care centre in Baghdad (Iraq) between January 2004 and May 2005, inclusive.

Objectives: To participate in public health activities, including accepting responsibility of infectious disease statistics, dispensing chronic disease medication and educating patients, assuring proper hygiene in schools and implementing vaccination campaigns.

Methods and activities: While treating patients as a general practitioner, I participated in public health activities approximately six hours a week.

Infectious disease activities included supervising the communicable disease surveillance system, and detecting and conducting outbreak investigations. A noteworthy outbreak investigation of gastroenteritis among high school students occurred in October 2004.

Medication dispensing program activities included providing medications for chronic diseases patients through a governmental subsidized program to ensure proper drugs usage. In addition to medication compliance activities, I counseled patients about their conditions.

Vaccination program activities included vaccinating infants, children till the age of 6 years, and students, and conducting vaccination campaigns for MMR and polio.

Student health care activities included touring of schools to identify students with infectious and noninfectious diseases. We also checked the schools' facilities to evaluate if they met public health standards. A written report summarizing the students and schools condition of followed every visit.

Conclusions and recommendations: Education and follow up are the best way to ensure healthy conditions in schools. Proper hygienic methods are the best way to prevent infectious disease. Compliance with the medications ensures the best outcome for chronic disease. Parents' education and adherence to vaccination protocols are critical to prevent infectious diseases.