

Care with Love Training Program for Home Health Care Providers

By Magda Iskander
Centre For Geriatric Services
Cairo - Egypt

The Egyptian society has experienced socio- economic changes as a result of development and modernization strategies, which resulted in a decline in the family size, education and employment of female family members, as well as migration of adult family members in pursuit of employment opportunities. These changes have affected the structure of urban families.

The improvements in life expectancy as a result of good medical care and health awareness, have culminated in a rise in the proportion of older persons (above 65 years of age). The proportion of the elderly within the Egyptian population has reached about 6.2%. It is estimated that around 600,000 of them reside within the Greater Cairo area. An increasing number of them are either living alone, with elderly spouses, and/or with only one or two family members. The weakness in the traditional extended family support has resulted in a drastic decline in the capacity of families to provide home health care for members convalescing, with disabilities, with chronic diseases and/or needing special health care. The capacity of existing health institutions does not meet the urban family emergent health needs.

There are limited options that are accessible to fill this service gap in hospitals or at homes. The option of paid home health care is also quite limited regardless of the large number of unemployed new graduates. There are no programs to train Home Health Care Providers, and domestic service suffers from low esteem since it is not addressed as a skilled occupation requiring adequate training.

There is a dire need for a system of Home Health Care Providers who are skilled and confident of what they do and how they do it, and who can provide the quality of home care that is client centered while taking into account circumstances

of the family as well as the community in which the client lives. Such needs are manifested in constant requests for such services by the Center for Geriatric Services and Asalam Hospital.

In response to these dire needs the Care With Love program which is a training program for Home Health Care Providers (HHCP) was established. The purpose of the program is to create a sustainable well trained cadre of Home Health Care Providers in Egypt in order to staff units for Home Health Care Services. It was developed at the Center for Geriatric Services (CGS) in partnership with the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) and Asalam Hospital, Mohandessin (S.H.) The program had the following objectives:

1. To Provide a comprehensive curriculum for training home health care providers.
2. To provide training in order to create a core of trainers for such programs.
3. To create new job opportunities.
4. To establish HHCPs referral units to provide affordable, accessible, and reliable services.

The name "Care With Love" was chosen because it was felt that this kind of service, to be meaningful, can only be done with love.

Students for this training are recruited from communities where CEOSS have development projects, and where other NGOs and Church groups work in underprivileged areas. Selection of students is a painstaking process to assure the good quality of the candidates.

Capable young men and women of good disposition (17-25 years of age) that read and write fluently must be of sound mind and able body to be able to join the training.

The training course is comprehensive offering the following subjects:

- Public Health & Nutrition Awareness
- Body mechanics and moving patients

*The center is in
need of training
home health care
workers to give
service to
the elderly in
their homes*

- Communication skills
- Daycare skills
- Body systems & Healthcare
- First aid & common diseases

Evaluation is an ongoing process, not only for academic achievement and acquiring practical skills, but also for personal growth and adjustment. Throughout the course there is emphasis on the wholeness of the human being with respect to individuality and privacy. Upon completion of the training course as designed and before graduation, the trainees spend a month of internship working as Home Health Care Providers under close supervision and evaluation.

After a period of preparation and fundraising (9 mo) the first training course began on September 8, 1996. The main objective of the project was to train 80-100 trainees within two years from the start of the training program while establishing Referral Units for provision of the HHCPs services to the community. About 115 trainees joined the program and took different courses from September 8, 1996 to January 31, 1999 with 99 graduates (constituting 90% of the candidates). The training course that started in March 99 is still running.

Following the graduation of the first group, the services of the graduates (HHCPs) were offered to the community through the CWL project to test the reaction of the market to the system of service provision and supervision. The need of the community was overwhelming. Feedback from the clients proved that our graduates were not only well trained, but also reliable, well mannered and compassionate.

The procedures for receiving and processing requests for service were tested, refined, and re-tested. The fees were estimated according to the type of service and number of hours/days requested. Training personnel for future referral units started in November 1997 at the CWL office. Two referral units were established at CGS and SH respectively in February 1998 under the supervision of the CWL project. There is a fee for service, and the graduates are paid through the referral units. Now these units are integrated into the services of CGS and SH, and the HHCPs are employed by these respective institutions.

Fifty five percent of the graduates are working through the CWL project as HHCPs, 6% are working with CWL as trainers, and 15% of the total trainees are working as HCPs in other institutions.

The CWL program not only addresses community needs but national government goals as well. New job opportunities are created through appropriate education and training without burdening the national budget. A new generation of trainers in the field of Health Care will increase the future number of

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trainees and reduce the overall cost of training. The tuition fees will be offered to the trainees as a payable loan to be paid over a period of time after graduation. Some stipulated scholarships are available through Health Institutions. Other scholarships are available for support of out of town trainees.

In view of the experience of the CWL project, the three partners (CEOSS, CGS, and S.H.) have decided to continue the training program beyond the two years that were agreed upon initially, and as an ongoing program. Other health institutions are now expressing their desire to do likewise. A twinning program has already started with a Sudanese group to train Sudanese HHCPs.

The Ministry of Health has agreed (Aug. 98) to extend the services of Asalam Hospital to the community through the Home Health Care Providers which means granting the HHCPs full insurance and employment benefits as hospital employees. Home Health Care will ultimately become an integral component of the national health care system reducing the per capita cost of long term health care services.

The Implementing Agencies

The Coptic Evangelical Organization For Social Services (CEOSS) is a well established Egyptian non-government organization registered under the Ministry of Social Affairs. CEOSS is a development agency that addresses problems of health, education, economics and community interrelationships. In these endeavors CEOSS serves members of all denominations.

Through its Community Health Unit, CEOSS has a long history of training community health workers who are involved with education and consciousness-raising in all aspects of public health. Besides its role in preventive medicine, there is direct intervention through the Primary Care Program, the Nutrition Program, the Family Planning Program as well as the Rehabilitation Program for the physically disabled.

The Center for Geriatric Services (CGS) is a non-profit long-term health care facility for the older persons. It was established and managed by the Women Union of the Evangelical Church (Synod of the Nile). The Center is in need of training home health care workers to achieve its objective of a "reach-out" service to the elderly at their homes.

Asalam Hospital (100 beds) is a private hospital committed to the delivering of quality health care through well trained health workers. It is also interested in delivering post-discharge short-term care to its patients in their homes, thus shortening their hospital stay and reducing the cost of health care.