Health Promotion for Elders in Nicaragua
A Community-Based Rehabilitation Approach

Pacific University College of Health Professions | Jessie F. Richardson Foundation

What is Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)?
Community-based rehabilitation is a strategy created through the collaborative effort of the World Health Organization and the United Nations to address poverty and disability in poor and underserved regions around the globe. It was developed to provide rehabilitation services, equalize opportunities, and promote inclusion in society of those of all ages experiencing poverty or disability. The CBR approach is implemented through efforts of people with disabilities, families, communities, government, non-government entities, and others to provide the necessary programs and services to meet the needs of people with disabilities within a given community, with the overall goal being that the community is able to independently sustain its own programs and services.

What are the Objectives of CBR?
1. To ensure that people with disabilities are able to maximize their abilities so as to become active contributors within society and the community.
2. To make the communities active in promoting and protecting the human rights through various changes in the community.
3. To enable and empower those needing support to become self-sufficient in order to manage and sustain themselves.

What Actions Guide a CBR Approach?
1. Create positive attitudes towards those with disabilities
2. Provide rehabilitation services
3. Provide education and training activities
4. Provide care facilities
5. Prevent disabilities by reducing the cause of disabilities
6. Manage, monitor and evaluate the efforts
What is the Role of the Health Professional in a CBR Approach?

1. Educate and train the community as a whole, limit the burden, create positive attitudes
2. Provide therapy when needed in preparation for participation
3. Provide resources and guidance so the community can become their own advocates and not become dependent upon institutional assistance
4. Facilitate program implementation, and establish program development at the community and government level
5. Insure and facilitate effective and efficient collaboration between various sectors in the community.

Conclusion:
The purpose of community-based rehabilitation programs is to increase self-sustainability within a community in regards to supporting people with disabilities. Success depends upon various means of support including the community itself, and may include other sources such as the government, non-governmental agencies, educational services, media sources, and healthcare sources. We have found this approach to be an effective strategy to begin to promote the health of elders in Nicaragua though further research of outcomes is needed.

Resources

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