

## Teaching Materials and Services

### Evaluating rural resource centres: guidelines from UNESCO

Community resource centres are emerging as one of the most favoured of the information delivery strategies in rural areas. Such centres not only provide sources of information but advice and guidance as well. Information formats are accessible by those who cannot read as well as the literate and newly literate. They act as centres for all agencies involved in information provision. They link external knowledge with indigenous knowledge. They repackage information and act as centres for information sharing. The community itself plays a crucial and active part in their establishment and maintenance.

There is now a need to assess how effective such centres are in providing the information that will lead to social and economic development of rural communities. UNESCO, on behalf of IFLA, has recently published guidelines for measuring performance and impact. The expectations of any rural information support system are isolated, described and discussed. Indicators have then been developed against which the expectations can be measured and suggestions are provided as to how these indicators can be applied to provide more efficient and effective information provision. Both expectations and indicators are based on the experience and practice of rural information provision, as revealed by the literature.

The indicators show: how effective centres have been in securing relevant resources; whether there have been increased opportunities for all sections of the community to access and use relevant information sources; how effective centres have been in management, planning and exhibiting accountability and whether the activities of the centres have had a positive impact on improving socio-economic conditions, extending the knowledge base of the community and increasing participation in government and extension programmes.

The publication is available free of charge from UNESCO:

**Division of Information and Informatics**

**1 rue Miollis**

**75732 Paris Cedex 15**

**France**

*Rural Information Provision in Developing Countries:  
Measuring Performance and Impact.*

Paris: UNESCO, 1997.

(CII-97/WS/11)

### Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

The challenge of maximizing drug safety yet maintaining public confidence has become increasingly complex. Pharmaceutical companies are required to employ named members of staff responsible for

pharmacovigilance. Health authorities grappled with the need to provide quality care whilst containing a burgeoning drug budget. Regulatory authorities must balance the potential benefits of new drugs with varying levels of suspicion of their potential harm.

This 20-week examined course in pharmacoepidemiology and pharmacovigilance addresses the increasing need for well informed professionals to work in all areas related to the assessment of drug safety and risk-benefit of drug use. It is an introductory course and should meet the needs of a wide variety of practitioners.

The course is part-time and comprises 175 hours (approximately one day per week) which are spent as follows: 55 hours formal teaching and contact time, 70 hours self-directed study and 50 hours project work. Formal teaching will take place during three sessions in 1999; 16–19 February, 13–15 April and 1–3 June. Participants will also be supported outside this time by a personal academic advisor.

The course is aimed at personnel concerned with the safe use of medicines in developed countries, including those working (or intending to work) in:

- the pharmaceutical industry who are involved in drug development, licensing, and surveillance
- regulatory bodies who are involved in licensing and surveillance

*Further information:* The Registry, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, 50 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3DP. E-mail: registry@lstm.ac.uk

### ***Essential Surgery in Leprosy. Techniques for District Hospitals. H. Srinivasan and DD Palande. WHO, Geneva***

The back cover summary of this WHO publication (WHO/LEP/96.2) reads:

This handbook provides practical training and service guidance to doctors in general hospitals about essential surgical procedures and techniques for individuals who have impairments and deformities due to leprosy. The procedures can correct deformities as well as prevent disabilities or arrest the worsening of disabilities.

The book is divided into two sections. Part I describes procedures which can be carried out at district hospital level. It covers procedures for the care and treatment of infections and ulceration of hands and feet, and for decompression and management of nerve abscesses to save nerves from paralysis, as well as simple techniques for eyelid paralysis. Part II includes more complicated procedures, such as tendon transfer. These require greater expertise and training, and must be supported by competent physiotherapists.

It is expected that the person using this handbook is already a qualified surgeon, or has had training and extensive experience in surgery. Although such expertise and experience will already exist in many general hospitals, the procedures and techniques may not be known to doctors because they have been performed only in a few specialized leprosy institutions. It is hoped that this handbook, by providing detailed descriptions of the procedures with a generous use of clear illustrations, will make it possible for leprosy-affected individuals to benefit from services offered in general hospitals, including those at the district level.

Main chapter headings include: general considerations, the promotion of healing of plantar ulcers, prevention of recurrent plantar ulceration, infections of the hand, decompression of nerve, nerve abscess, correction of lagophthalmos, correction of foot drop, correction of paralytic deformities of the hand, correction of paralytic claw-fingers, correction of paralytic claw-thumb deformities.

Published 1996. A4 format, 135 pages. Price not stated. *Further information:* Action Programme for the Elimination of Leprosy, WHO. CH-1211, Geneva 27, Switzerland.

### ***A Guide to Funding from Government Departments and Agencies***

The Directory of Social Change (Publications), 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP, United Kingdom, Tel 0171-209-5151. Fax 0171-209-5049. E-mail info@d-s.demon.co.uk, has released the above Guide (£18.95), with the following description:

**The only comprehensive guide to £2 billion a year of government funding.** It covers 16 government departments, including the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland Offices, and over 50 related agencies, revealing a possible **200 sources of funding** for voluntary sector organizations.

#### **It includes**

- special grant programmes open only to the voluntary sector
- agency programmes open to both the public and private sectors
- special departmental initiatives to pilot new approaches
- annual grant-in-aid to specific voluntary organizations

#### **For each programme the guide shows the following:**

- Departmental context
- Annual funding available compared to previous years
- Analysis of grant-making
- Policy guidelines & exclusions
- Application deadlines and advice sources
- Contact name and address

#### **The guide also explains:**

- The responsibilities of each department
- The impact of regional government
- The conventions covering government funding applications
- The civil service hierarchy

### ***‘Clinical Tuberculosis’ by John Crofton, Norman Horne and Fred Miller; yearly report from TALC, UK***

Teaching Aids at Low Cost (TALC), PO Box 49, St Albans, Herts AL1 5TX, United Kingdom, Tel +44(0) 1727 853869. Fax +44(0) 1727 846852, has issued a progress report, August 1998.

**Present background.** WHO has declared the world epidemic of tuberculosis a global emergency. The situation is now exacerbated by the explosion of HIV and the rising threat of multidrug resistance. The usefulness of the book has been emphasized by the enormous demand for it in many countries and its translation into many languages. We expect an equal demand for the second edition now in production. Publication is expected in late 1998.

**Purpose of the book.** The book was written in simple English (with a glossary) for non-specialized doctors, nurses and health assistants in the Third World. Commissioned by TALC, it was published in the UK by Macmillans in 1992. It was sponsored by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD) and financially supported both by WHO and by a number of national and international charities.

**Publication and costs.** With financial support from donors it was sold at a low price (£3) in poorer countries and provided free in the poorest. (A subsidy from the British Government enabled one reprint of 1000 copies to be sold at £2). In industrialized countries the full price has been £10.99. The authors receive no fees or royalties.

**Distribution, translations and use.** We calculate that nearly 76,500 copies in 16 languages have been distributed in 124 countries (with 4000 copies in Urdu and Bengali in progress). We arranged the French, Spanish and Portuguese translations for use where each was the appropriate second language.

Requests to produce the other translations mostly came from professionals in the relevant countries. Some needed subsidies for translation and/or publication costs. Editions in two more languages, Urdu and Bengali, are in preparation. A request has also been received for permission for an Uzbek edition.

The book has been extensively used in national and international training courses. We encourage local reproduction of extracts as long as these are not used for commercial purposes. The book is recommended for further reading in a number of WHO publications.

**Second edition.** The major changes in the forthcoming second edition are revising the treatment sections to conform with the latest WHO/IUATLD recommendations and a considerable enlargement of the chapter on HIV and tuberculosis. In addition, the whole text has been reviewed and, when necessary, revised.

**Financial needs.** Judging by the remarkable demands for the first edition we will require extensive help to provide free or cheap copies of the second English edition in poor countries. We will also need funds for the costs of translation and publication in a number of languages in which the first edition has appeared.

### **The Wellcome Trust Training & Fellowships for Research into Infectious Diseases for Scientists from Tropical & Developing Countries**

The trust recognizes the continuing threat of infectious diseases in tropical and developing countries and wishes to develop research expertise which is sustainable in these countries in order to address health problems arising from infectious diseases. The awards are intended to provide both training and research experience for applicants, who must be based in a developing or tropical country. The training will be obtained at international centres of excellence in either the UK, Republic of Ireland, or any country in the developing or restructuring world, and a substantial period of research will be undertaken in the applicant's home country. For instance, a four-year award would normally include a minimum of two years' research in the home country over the period of the award. AIDS/HIV-related studies relevant to tropical regions are fully supportable.

#### **Eligibility**

Applications are invited from postdoctoral basic scientists or medical graduates of up to six years' research experience (postdoctoral) who are nationals of developing countries. Applications may be considered in exceptional circumstances from those who are educated to first degree or Master's level, who are able to demonstrate substantive potential for research and operational leadership and who have research experience equivalent to a PhD, as evidenced by their publication record. Applicants will wish to become independent research scientists through high-quality research into infectious diseases of regional significance to their home country. The research proposal must include a clear argument outlining the relevance of the project to the home country. Applications will be assessed on the basis of the candidate's achievements in research, the scientific merit of the proposal and the appropriateness of the research for the proposed location. The nature of the training component and the training site chosen must be appropriate for the proposed research.

#### **Funding**

Awards will be for a maximum of four years, non-renewable. Fellowship support may include a salary/stipend appropriate to the countries in which the candidate will be studying/working, as well as project-dedicated and travel expenses. All expenses must be fully justified. Consideration may also be given to the expense of attending a course leading to a recognized qualification in a discipline relevant to the fellowship research programme.

## Application procedure

The preliminary approach to the Trust should include an outline of the proposed research, an approximate budget and curriculum vitae of the applicant, together with a written guarantee of subsequent employment from the host institution in the applicant's home country and a letter of support from a suitable sponsor at the training institution. Applications will be considered throughout the year.

Further information about the initiative can be obtained from:

The Grants Section (Tropical)  
The Wellcome Trust  
London NW1 2BE  
Tel: 0171 611 8409  
Fax: 0171 611 7288

Information is also available on the Web: [www.wellcome.ac.uk](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk)

*NB: Applicants may not apply for more than one Trust fellowship scheme at any one time.*

## University of London External Programme

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine is a research-led postgraduate medical school of international standing with nearly 100 years of research and teaching experience in the field of public health and tropical medicine. The School encompasses the largest group of epidemiologists and statisticians in Europe.

This new distance learning course will be offered through the University of London's External Programme from September 1999, and will soon join the MSc & Postgraduate Diploma in Health Systems Management, and MSc & Postgraduate Diploma in Infectious Diseases which are being introduced in September 1998.

The level of teaching and assessment throughout the course will be of the same excellent standard as that of Internal students.

## Who should apply?

This new Masters degree and diploma are appropriate for people from a range of professions, disciplines, cultures and countries, who are interested in, or are already working in the field of epidemiology and public health.

## Admission criteria

*MSc:* A second class honours degree or the equivalent, in health related disciplines or in statistics or another appropriate subject. Work experience in a health science/health care setting is desirable but not essential. Candidates with an appropriate professional or technical qualification in a health-related field, together with at least three years' relevant experience, which satisfies the University as a qualification equivalent to a second class degree will be considered on an individual basis.

*Postgraduate diploma:* A degree or an appropriate professional or technical qualification which satisfies the University as a qualification on the same level as a degree. Work experience in a health sciences/health care setting is desirable but not essential.

## Study materials and study support

This programme will be primarily computer-based; students will be provided with unit study packages in CD format/disk or print. These packages will consist of a variety of comprehensive, lively and interactive materials, including, where applicable:

- original materials, containing the core element of the unit; self-assessment exercises; sample examination questions
- a student guide with information on planning studies, preparing for examinations and study techniques
- a student manual on installation and operation of software- and computer-based materials
- a reader/resource pack; textbooks

The nature of course delivery necessitates that students have access to a computer with minimum hardware requirements, and to email. Students will be provided with all the materials they need to do the course, so will not require access to a library.

Students will be allocated a personal tutor and course tutor for each unit who will provide feedback on questions arising from their work.

## How long will it take?

Students may complete the Postgraduate Diploma in one year and the whole MSc in two. However, students may take up to five years to complete their studies.

## Occasional students

The Occasional student programme will appeal to those who wish to study a particular unit for general interest or specific training reasons.

## Application and registration

Application deadline: 30 June 1999  
 Registration deadline: 31 July 1999  
 Course starting date: 14 September 1999

## Fees

### *Diploma:*

Registration: £500 + four core units @ £750 = £3,500

### *Masters:*

Registration: £500 + four core units @ £750 + six advanced units @ £273 + Project report @ £812 = £5,950

Occasional student: composite fee of £1,000 for a core unit or £522 for an advanced unit

## The Fifth Asian Dermatological Congress, Beijing, China: 14–17 October 1998

Under the concerted effort of the Congress Organizing Committee, the 5th Asian Dermatological Congress was successfully held at the Beijing International Convention Center on October 14–17, 1998.

The theme of the congress was 'Oriental Medicine Toward the World'. More than 700 dermatologists from various parts of China and more than 400 colleagues from abroad attended the Congress. Apart from the delegates from Asia, the Congress was well supported by dermatological experts from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and many European countries.

Twenty-five plenary lectures were given by the invited distinguished attendants at the Congress, covering a wide range of dermatological topics, including 'Immunobiology of the skin' by Dr Stephen I. Katz from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases of the USA, 'Dermatology in the 21st century' by Dr Klaus Wolff from the University of Vienna in Austria and 'Study on risk of leprosy relapses in China' by Dr Xiangsheng Chen from the National Center for STD and Leprosy Control of China. A total of 14 scientific sessions were spread over the 3 days, with both oral and poster presentations. Areas covered included basic science in dermatology, psoriasis, autoimmune skin disorders and infectious skin disorders.

Leprosy was included in the session of infectious skin disorders and there were five scientific papers on leprosy presented at the Congress, despite the fact that the 15th International Leprosy Congress had taken place at the same venue just 1 month before.

The Congress was organized by the Chinese Society of Dermatology and co-organized by the Beijing Medical University, the Peking Union Medical College and the Capital University of Medical Sciences under the auspices of the Asian Dermatological Association and the Chinese Medical Association.

The sixth Asian Dermatological Congress will be held in Thailand in 2001.

*Xiang-Sheng Chen,  
National Center for STD and Leprosy Control,  
Institute of Dermatology, CAMS & PUMC,  
Nanjing, China*