1.1 Introduction

Medical officer at PHC is usually the first medical professional coming in contact of persons affected with leprosy and is responsible for providing treatment, refer PAL for appropriate treatment and provide follow up services to them. They are also responsible for training other members of health team working at PHC formally or informally during staff meetings and supervisory visits. Hence, capacity building of medical officers is crucial to provide quality care to people affected with leprosy and keep the disease under control in the community.

Orientation training for newly appointed Medical Officers may be arranged for 3-4 days including DPMR services. Re - Orientation Training for 2 days may be arranged for already trained Medical Officers that must include quick revision of diagnosis of leprosy and its management and detailed exposure to disability assessment and prevention.

- **During training, use the available resources optimally and concentrate on:**
  - Quality of training,
  - Achieving learning objectives

1.2 Designing and conducting a training programme:

Before conducting the training, try to determine the level of awareness (and thereby the training needs) of the trainees (eg. like whether they are newly appointed medical officers or medical officers who have already worked for leprosy programme), what is their level of experience (of leprosy and the programme), what are their learning requirements eg accuracy/confidence of diagnosis - as there are only a few diagnosed cases in their area; or in diagnosis and management of lepra reactions - which they may have never encountered. Based on this information, try to formulate objectives you intend to achieve, and then decide the course contents and methodology to achieve these objectives. The “Training Manual for Medical Officers in leprosy and facilitator’s guide” can be referred to design a training programme as per the specific needs of the trainees. During training constantly interact with the trainees, to focus on training needs of the participants and discuss it with other facilitators to modify the training according to the assessed requirements.

1.3 Designing and preparing for a training programme:

- **Assess training needs:** Training needs can be assessed by studying the job profile of the trainees; discussion with supervisors, trainees; analyse records, reports, supervisory visit reports and programme implementation.

After assessing the needs, plan for preparation, conduction and evaluation of the training programme

- **Formulate learning objective** – Keeping the job responsibilities/ task given to trainee and specific needs of the participants in mind, formulate ‘learning objectives’ for each session and keep them in mind while designing, conducting and evaluating the training programme to minimize deviation.

- **Design curriculum:** Design curriculum, as per the assessed training needs, formulated learning objectives and available resources (time, trainers, material etc). Care must be taken, not to deviate from the defined learning objectives and try to achieve it in the allocated time. Emphasis must be given to DPMR aspects including diagnosis, assessment of client needs, prevention of disability and community based rehabilitation. Check the included curriculum and modify it in light of the results of pre test and concurrent feed back from trainees. (*Mr Abraham was gifted a nice shirt on his birth day. The collar, pocket and cufflinks of shirt were beautiful, cloth was superb and buttons were golden. He could not use the shirt because the size was quite large.* ***Therefore, content selection should be as per the requirement of the trainees and their job chart****).*
- **Prepare training design & schedule:** Training design and sample of training schedule is included for reference. It may be modified according to the contents and available resources. Select appropriate teaching methods for each session e.g. case demonstration, role play, group exercises, case study etc. Select appropriate teaching aids, according to the contents and training methodology. (will it be possible *to fill 2 liters of liquid in a bottle with one liter capacity or try to fill a narrow mouth bottle without a funnel)*

  Try to provide adequate opportunities and free atmosphere to trainees to enable them to clarify their doubts. Trainees may be asked to read the relevant section before coming for training and discuss various issues that need clarification.

- **Prepare pre/post questionnaire or exercises:** Check the given questionnaire and other tools. Keep ready the number of copies required. (*Questionnaire & exercises may be changed or modified with justifications)*
- **Audio Visual aids:** Keeping in view the availability of equipments & time. Prepare audio visuals e.g. OHP transparency, slides, charts, power point presentations etc. .(*The ready made slides and other learning material may be modified as per need & justification)*
- **Check the venue /class room** for required sitting arrangements, availability of fresh air and natural light, electrical connections for AV aids. Unnecessary wall hangings/posters (which divert attention) must be removed.

1.4 Conduction of training programme

Consider following points while conducting training:

- Concentrate on ‘how to achieve learning objectives’ through active learning process
- Try to remove barriers / factors distracting learning
- Constantly interact with the participants to know participant’s reactions and modify content/ training methodology accordingly.

- Evaluate the training course, learning at the end of course and plan to evaluate on the job performance of trainees and effect of training after few months. Discuss the methodology with the participants and their supervisors. Ask participants to keep in touch and provide feedback for modifications in the programme.

Follow Principles of adult learning

- Adults are people with years of experience and a wealth of information. Focus on the strengths learners bring to the classroom, not just gaps in their knowledge. Tap their experience as a major source of enrichment to the class.
- Adults have established values, beliefs and opinions. Demonstrate respect for differing beliefs, religions, value systems and lifestyles.
- Adults are people whose style and pace of learning has probably changed. Reaction time and speed of learning may be slow, but the ability to learn is not impaired by age. Most adults prefer teaching methods other than lecture.
- Adults relate new knowledge and information to previously learned information and experiences. Present single concept and focus on application of concept to relevant practical situations.
- Plan frequent breaks, even if they are 2-minute "stretch" breaks.
- Adults have pride. Allow people to admit confusion, ignorance, fears, biases and different opinions. Acknowledge or thank students for their responses and questions. Treat all questions and comments with respect. .
- Adults have a deep need to be self-directing. Don't "spoon-feed" the participants.
- Adults tend to have a problem-centered orientation to learning. Emphasize how learning can be applied in a practical setting.

Encourage Interaction

- Interact with every participant and encourage participants to interact freely. In response, it is likely that the participants will overcome their hesitation and realizing the willingness of facilitators to interact; may start interacting.
- Look carefully at each participant’s work. Try to find whether participants are having any problems, even if they do not ask for help. If facilitators show interest and provide undivided attention to each participant, the participants in turn would be compelled to work, participate actively and to ask for help whenever needed.
- Be readily available to the participant at all times; remain in the room and be approachable.

Keep participants involved

- Ask questions frequently to check the understanding of the subject by the participants and keep them actively thinking and participating. Questions that begin with ‘What, Why & How’ require more than a few words to answer. Avoid questions that can be answered with just one word and formulate questions in a positive way, for example ‘Do you think this idea is applicable in your working area?’ or ‘Do you agree with what has been said? After asking a question, pause. Give participants time to think and formulate a response. A common mistake is to ask a question and then answer it yourself. If no one answers the question, rephrasing the question can help break the tension of silence. But do not do this repeatedly. Some silence is productive.

- Acknowledge all participants' responses. This will make participants feel valued and encourage them and others to continue to participate. Do this with a comment, a 'thank you for contribution' or a definite nod. If you think a participant has missed the point, ask for clarification or ask if another participant has a suggestion. If a participant feels his comment is ridiculed or ignored, he may withdraw from the discussion entirely or not speak voluntarily again.
- Answer participants' questions willingly and encourage participants to ask questions as soon as they think of them rather than waiting until a later time.
- Use names while calling participants to speak, and when give them credit or thanks. Use the speaker's name while referring back to a previous comment.
- Always maintain eye contact with the participants so that everyone feels included. Be careful while looking at the participants. Do not look at the same participant all the time. Looking at a participant for a few seconds will often prompt a reply, even from a withdrawn participant.

Keep the session focused and lively

- Keep discussion lively by presenting information conversationally rather than reading it, by moving around the room and using natural hand gestures, by speaking clearly and varying the pace and pitch of the voice.
- Write key ideas on a flip-chart, this is a good way to acknowledge response. The speaker would know his suggestions has been heard and will have the gratification of having it recorded for the entire group to see. When recording ideas on a flip-chart, use the participant's own words if possible. If you must make it briefer, paraphrase the idea and check it with the participant before writing it. If you can't find the right words to paraphrase the idea, ask the participant if he can paraphrase it for you. Ensure that the participant feels you have understood and recorded his idea accurately. While writing on the board, do not turn back to the group for long periods. Use a different coloured marker to record each new idea, on the flip-chart with. This will make the individual ideas more readable.
- Paraphrase and summarize frequently to keep participants focused on a clear idea and to keep discussions on track. Ask participants for clarification of statements as needed. Also, encourage other participants to ask speakers to repeat or clarify their statement.
- Repeat the original question to the group to get them focused on the main issue again. If someone resists getting back on track, first pause to get the group's attention, tell them that they have gone astray, and then repeat the original question.
- At the beginning of a discussion, write the main question on the flip-chart. Having the question visible will help most participants to keep themselves on track. When needed, walk to the clip-chart and point to the question.
- Do not let several participants talk at one time. When this occurs, stop the speaker and assign an order for speaking. People usually will not interrupt if they know they will have a turn to talk.

- Try to encourage quieter participants to contribute to the group discussions. Ask to hear from a participant in the group who has not spoken before or walk towards someone to focus attention on him and make him feel he is being asked to talk. Do not embarrass or frighten a reluctant participant.

Relate Exercises to Participants' Work

- Discuss the application of new concepts to real problems to ensure that participants begin to think about how to apply what they are learning.
- As a first step in relating course concepts to work, ask participants to tell the group their responsibilities as a leprosy control manager.
- After finding out the participants' job profile, ask the participant whether he/she can use the skills that he learned, and discuss any potential difficulties in implementation.
- Reinforce participants who discuss or ask questions about practical application of skills.
- Do not reject alternative methods suggests by the participants; discuss them thoroughly and compare them with those proposed in the modules.

Leading a Group Discussion and Plenary Session

- Prepare the environment. All participants in the discussion should be able to see everyone else's face and be close enough to hear each other comfortably.
- Set the objectives of the discussion either independently, or in agreement with participants. The principle is to apply what has already been partially learnt rather than cover new ground.
- Control the degree of participation of each of the members of the group. Make sure that all members participate and that no one person dominates the discussion. You can help to ensure this by directing questions to the more reserved participants and inviting the more talkative to wait until the others have had a chance to speak.
- Set a well defined end-point. This will help to make the discussion more purposeful and structured. This can be done by asking for a list of recommendations, a list of advantages and disadvantages, and a decision. Appointing one or more of the participants as secretary to note down the major points is helpful.
- Clarify the discussions by asking one participant to summarize what another has said or asking participants whether comments are facts or interpretations. Whenever errors of fact occur correct them, then & there. Refer to the secretary's summary of points made form time to time. Keep all comments relevant to the main theme of the discussion.
- Prepare material for discussion in advance by drawing up for yourself a list of the points that you feel should be covered and generally being familiar with relevant facts.

Manage Problems/distracting participants

- To make participants feel self conscious, walk towards them while they are talking.
- To focus attention away from the participants, walk away from the participants or turn back to them

- When the participant pauses, break in quickly and ask to hear from another member of the group.
- Record the participant's main idea on a flip-chart. If he/she continues to talk about the idea, point to it on the flip-chart and say: Thank you, we have already covered your suggestion.' Then ask the group for another idea.
- Do not ask the talkative participant any more questions. If he/she answers all the questions directed to the group, ask for an answer from another individual specifically or from a specific subgroup.
- Try to identify participants who have difficulty in understanding or speaking the language. Speak slowly and distinctly so you can be more easily understood and encourage the participant in his effort to communicate. Speak with the participant in his native language if possible, to clarify a point.

Maintain Participants Interest

- Assess daily the participant's progress, their motivation and the interest they show in participating.
- Manage the time so that exercises are completed as planned, but be as flexible as possible. Re-set the agenda and time-table accordingly.