Right to Health
&
St. Martha’s Hospital

St. Martha’s Hospital

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What is Right to Health?

- The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
  - Fundamental to understanding life and dignity
  - A fundamental part of overall human rights
Promoting and protecting health and respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights are inextricably linked:

- Violations or lack of attention to human rights can have serious health consequences (e.g. harmful traditional practices, slavery, torture and inhuman and degrading treatment, violence against women and children).
- Health policies and programmes can promote or violate human rights in their design or implementation (e.g. freedom from discrimination, individual autonomy, rights to participation, privacy and information).
- Vulnerability to ill-health can be reduced by taking steps to respect, protect and fulfil human rights (e.g. freedom from discrimination on account of race, sex and gender roles, rights to health, food and nutrition, education, housing).

Examples of the linkages between health and human rights:

- **Harmful Traditional Practices**
- **Torture**
- **Slavery**
- **Violence against women**
- **Freedom from discrimination**
- **Right to privacy**
- **Freedom of movement**
- **Freedom from discrimination**
- **Right to information**
- **Right to education**
- **Right to food & nutrition**
- **Right to water**
- **Promotion or violation of human rights through health development**
- **Reducing vulnerability to ill-health through human rights**
- **Health & human rights violations resulting in ill-health**
Key Aspects of Right to health
Right to health is inclusive

Inclusive of not just healthcare and hospitals but other determinants which promote health e.g., safe drinking water, nutritious food, shelter, environment etc.
Links with determinants of health

“The right to health”

Underlying determinants
water, sanitation, food, nutrition, housing, healthy occupational and environmental conditions, education, information, etc.

Health-care

AAAQ
Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, Quality

(General Comment No. 14 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)
Right to health contains entitlements

Equal opportunity to access healthcare service and other healthcare goods to everyone without discrimination.
Right to health contains freedoms

Freedom from inhuman activities and those that degrade human dignity.

Freedom from coercion, force and torture
Right to health & the girl child
States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health-care services.
States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

1. (a) To diminish infant and child mortality;

2. (b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;

3. (c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;

4. (d) To ensure appropriate prenatal and post-natal health care for mothers;

5. (e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic
Vulnerability of Children

- Children especially girl children are vulnerable to:
  - Malnutrition
  - Violence
  - Infectious diseases
  - Sexual and reproductive health issues
  - Stress and Mental health
Issues at St. Martha’s

• Common causes of morbidity in the pediatric age group at St. Martha’s Hospital
  • Respiratory Diseases
  • Infectious diseases
  • Liver disorders
Issues at St. Martha’s...

- Common causes of morbidity among the Neonates
  - Prematurity
  - Small for date
- Both these issues are linked to maternal nutrition and poverty
Other overarching issues...

• Cost of treatment. One of the major hinderances in access to healthcare is the cost of treatment.

• Geographical limit to service since resources are limited unlike the government healthcare system.

• Limitation in addressing other issues that determine health of the people like availability of safe drinking water, sanitation, shelter, nutritious food etc.
What can St. Martha’s do?

- Improve access to services:
  - Open NICU for babies referred from outside
  - Open isolation ward for infectious disease rather than refer them out
  - Improving health education program within the hospital. Teaching mothers on nutrition, sanitation etc.
• Improving access by reducing cost:
  • As a NGO run hospital, where funds have to be locally generated, effective mechanisms to finance poor patients need to be considered. Creating a larger corpus of funds for treating poor patients
  • Use of generic drugs which reduces the cost of medicine to the patient
• Improve availability of services
  • For physically and mentally challenged children
  • Baby/child friendly OPD and IP - play areas, toy & book library etc
• Improving quality

• Improving ambience

• Mechanisms for Medical Audit

• Working towards NABH accreditation of the hospital
Thank You!