

Family Medicine: Primary Care

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Received date: 11 February, 2021; **Accepted date:** 24 February, 2021; **Published date:** 28 February, 2021

Introduction

Family medicine is a medical specialty for individuals of all ages committed to holistic health treatment. The specialist is called as family doctor/physician. In some countries like Europe it is names as General practitioner/doctor which emphasizes the whole nature of its specialty. Family medicine is a branch of primary health care that provides health care an individual and family beyond the limits of age, gender, disease, and body organ. Family doctors are the physicians who provide primary care for all. It is based on patients' awareness in the family and neighborhood sense, highlighting disease preventative measures and health promotion. World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) defines the aim of family practice as "holistic and continuous treatment for the individual in context of the family and the society. The concerns of principles that underlie this profession are generally referred to as primary care ethics.

In developed countries like United Kingdom and United States family practice has been an independent and separate medical practice since long back as 1960s. In countries like Nepal, Srilanka and Pakistan family medicine is taught at graduation and post-graduation curriculums. In India family medicine is the practicing vocation of the majority doctors. In Japan family medicine has recently been recognized in 2015 and presently has a good number of practitioners.

Family Practice: Center of Primary Health Care

Family doctors are the only practitioners trained to handle any illnesses and offer extensive health services for patients of all ages; unlike other specialists those are limited to a single organ or illness. Looks like that:

- Providing health to patients regardless of age or health status, ensuring a long lasting and trustworthy relation
- Understanding variables socioeconomic determinants of health
- Acting as the first touch with health issues for a patient
- Health care system navigation for patients, including management of specialist and outpatient care and follow-up.
- Using technologies and evidence to coordinate resources and optimize treatment
- Considering the influence of wellbeing on the families of a patient.

Importance of Family Practitioner

Family doctors are more important than ever in the age of super specialty medicine. There is not one practitioner today who is responsible for the entire person. When their minor health-related questions are unanswered by the prescribing doctors, people often find it difficult, since they have to contact several health care facilities. This is worse for elderly people with various health conditions. People want remedies that can only be offered by family doctors that are capable of general treatment. For developing countries where there is no proper health care system is available, as it is impossible for even developed countries to deal with the ever rising cost of tertiary care facilities. Family doctors will provide quality and cost-effective healing services.

As family medicine covers a wide range of population and health care ranging from antenatal care to palliative care and end of life situations, family practitioners must acquire necessary skills.

Cite this article: Sunitha. Family Medicine: Primary Care. Prim Health Care, 2021, 11(2), 367.