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The Development and Implementation of Prevention of Disability Interventions within Buruli Ulcer Control Programs which includes the Person's affected by Buruli Ulcer, the Community and Health Services

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INTRODUCTION

Buruli Ulcer (BU) is the third most common mycobacteriosis in humans after tuberculosis and Hansen's disease (leprosy). This neglected disease is known in more than 30 countries, with a higher incidence in poor, rural, tropical areas of West and Central Africa. The *Mycobacterium ulcerans* of the disease starts as a painless nodule or papule and if left untreated progresses to extensive ulceration, necrotizing skin, subcutaneous tissue and occasionally bones. In recent years it has increasingly become an important cause of morbidity in the world.

OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate how occupational therapy can influence prevent of disability within BU control programs advocated by the World Health Organization.
- To show the importance of Occupational Therapist inclusion and participation in public health programs.

DESCRIPTION

Interventions should be client centered addressing both medical and social issues. A list of key messages considered important for preventing disability will be shown from the perspective of the program manager, health worker and client.

Decentralization of treatment and services to improve access requires participation and commitment of political and health leaders, non-governmental organizations, health workers, persons affected by BU and communities. All stakeholders must learn to work together to resolve barriers. One of the greatest barriers to preventing disability is the resistance of health workers and specialist to empower persons affected by BU and their communities to do basic interventions which can prevent disability at the home and community level. Therapist will hear about lessons learned from self-help groups in leprosy to minimize disability and sustain it over time and how these lessons are important to BU.

CONCLUSIONS

- The Occupational Therapist is important in promoting health and preventing disability in Buruli Ulcer Control Programs
- The Occupational Therapist will be challenged to use self-help groups and measure outcomes of client, family and community before and after self-help groups

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PRACTICE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- Development of Occupational Therapy Practice within Public Health and Disease Control Programs, promoting access of treatment and services which will promote health and prevent disability
- Occupational Therapy facilitating client centered interventions which are driven by the client and their families within their environmental context.