

# “Role of IEC (Information, Education and Communication) in health Care system W.S.R to Mental Dimension of Health”

Ms. Swati Jamwal<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Abhishek Magotra<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MSc. Nursing (Mental Health Nursing), Babe Ke Institute of Nursing, Daudhar, Moga, Punjab

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor Department of Swasthavritta and yoga GAMC Akhnoor

---

## ABSTRACT

Information, Education and Communication (IEC), is a method to spread knowledge through communication channels to a target audience to achieve a desired positive outcome. Our mental health encompasses our emotional, psychological, and social well-being, influencing our thoughts, feelings, and actions. It plays a crucial role in shaping our responses to stress, our relationships with others, and our ability to make healthy decisions. Throughout our lives, from childhood and adolescence to adulthood, mental health remains a vital aspect of our overall well-being. Across the lifespan, mental health is a critical factor, impacting individuals from the early stages of childhood and adolescence through the various phases of adulthood. This article will reveal importance of IEC in mental health and this article will also elaborate about the different method of IEC to improve mental health .

**Keywords:** IEC, Information, Education and Communication, Mental Health, Health Care System.

---

## INTRODUCTION

Mental health can benefit significantly from Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) efforts, which can effectively promote awareness, shift perspectives, and encourage positive habits. By disseminating targeted materials, IEC initiatives can empower individuals to recognize their role in addressing mental health disparities.

Through culturally tailored messaging, IEC activities can challenge and transform harmful attitudes and behaviors.

Furthermore, IEC can equip people with the knowledge to make informed choices and adopt healthy lifestyle practices, ultimately supporting mental well-being. Areas within this profession encompass environmental health, physical health, social health, emotional health, intellectual health, and spiritual health, as well as sexual and reproductive health.

It can also be defined as any combination of learning activities that aim to assist individuals and communities improve their health by expanding knowledge or altering attitudes.

### Role of IEC in Health System

Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) is a vital public health strategy that empowers individuals, families, and communities to adopt healthy behaviors, promoting overall wellbeing. By leveraging IEC, health professionals can:

- **Facilitate Behavior Change:** Encourage informed decision-making, modify harmful behaviors, and address social determinants of health. For instance, IEC can promote healthy aging practices.
- **Advocate for policy change:** Inspire policymakers to create supportive environments that foster behavioral changes.
- **Provide Essential Services:** Offer resources like condoms, counseling, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases etc.

### IEC initiatives often employ a range of tactics, including:

- Visual aids (posters, flyers, leaflets, brochures, booklets)
- Health education sessions
- Radio and TV broadcasts

**To ensure effectiveness, IEC initiatives should have:**

- Clear objectives
- A specific target audience
- A focused problem statement
- A defined timeframe for achieving results

**IEC activities for District Mental Health Program:**

- Lecture classes on causes, symptoms and classification of mental illnesses
- Identification and treatment of mental illnesses in the community
- Case demonstration
- Case presentation by the trainees and discussion
- Demonstration of case record and referral
- Field visit to Primary Health Centre to demonstrate IEC activities and community intervention
- Field visits are organised to demonstrate the misconceptions about the mental illnesses and to highlight the plight of mentally ill in the community.
- Post training evaluation and feed back from the trainees about the training

**PSYCHO-Education (New Concept in IEC for Mental Health)**

Psychoeducation is a crucial aspect of mental health education, focusing on informing individuals about the warning signs, risk factors, and symptoms of various mental health conditions. This educational approach can be customized to suit diverse audiences, such as employers, educators, healthcare professionals, and children, who require age-appropriate information. For instance, when educating someone about depression, key points to cover include:

- Recognizing common symptoms
- Understanding causes and risk factors
- Knowing when to seek help

Additionally, psychoeducation aims to dispel prevalent myths surrounding mental illness, many of which persist despite growing awareness efforts. By addressing these misconceptions, psychoeducation promotes a more accurate understanding of mental health.

**Behavior Change Communication**

Behavior Change Communication (BCC) is a dynamic, community-focused approach that crafts personalized messages and strategies through diverse communication channels to foster positive behaviors, promote enduring change at individual, community, and societal levels, and reinforce existing beneficial habits. By leveraging evidence-based theories and models of behavior modification, BCC strategically harnesses communication to drive improved health outcomes. This structured process encompasses formative research, behavior analysis, communication planning, implementation, and continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure effective and sustainable behavior change.

**BCC Strategy:**

- 1. User Identification:** Determine the primary audience for the message.
- 2. Community Mobilization:** Utilize mass media to raise awareness about national initiatives, such as adolescent wellbeing and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services, through platforms like:
  - Home visits
  - Community gatherings
- 3. Target Population:** Identify the key demographic that will benefit most from the message.
- 4. Development of Healthy Behavior Messages:** Create targeted content on topics like:
  - VICH (Very Important Child Health)
  - Nutrition
  - Contraception
  - Adolescent Health
  - Hygiene
  - Sanitation
  - Epidemic prevention

### **Stress Management (Part of IEC)**

Effective stress management involves a multi-faceted approach that goes beyond just relaxation techniques. It requires a combination of:

1. Stress reduction strategies
2. Self-awareness of internal stressors, such as conflicts, anxieties, attitudes, and beliefs
3. Skillful activation of the relaxation response to break the cycle of stress

While relaxation techniques can help alleviate stress up to a point, they are not a panacea. Additional support may be needed, such as:

- Counseling or psychotherapy to address internal factors
- Time management skills to tackle work-related stressors
- Lifestyle changes, including:
  - Balanced nutrition
  - Regular exercise

A comprehensive stress management plan acknowledges that relaxation techniques are just one part of the solution, and that a holistic approach is necessary for lasting improvement.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) plays a vital role in mental health by: Empowering individuals and communities to take control of their mental wellbeing, Reducing stigma and promoting early intervention, Enhancing knowledge, skills, and support networks, Encouraging behavior change and healthy lifestyle choices and improving access to mental health services and resources. Effective IEC in mental health can lead to: Improved mental health outcomes, Enhanced quality of life, Increased social inclusion and support, Reduced mental health disparities, Strengthened community resilience. By integrating IEC into mental health strategies, we can promote a culture of understanding, support, and empowerment, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more compassionate society.

The Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) approach empowers individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to take ownership of their health and wellbeing. IEC is a fundamental component of primary health care, community health, and health promotion initiatives. In the context of mental health, the State Mental Health Authority has implemented various IEC activities, including: training programs for targeted groups, such as police officers and religious leaders, to enhance their understanding and response to mental health issues, sensitization programs to reduce stigma and promote mental health awareness, public awareness programs to educate and inform the community about mental health and wellbeing. These IEC initiatives aim to promote active participation, raise awareness, and foster a supportive environment for mental health and wellbeing.

### **REFERENCES**

- [1]. Health promotion and consumer health education : A task force report. Prodist. 1976. ISBN 978-0-88202-104-1.
- [2]. Joint Committee on Terminology (2001). "Report of the 2000 Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology". American Journal of Health Education. 32 (2): 89–103. doi:10.1080/19325037.2001.10609405. S2CID 220328025.
- [3]. "List of Basic Terms". Health Promotion Glossary (PDF). World Health Organization. 1998. p. 4. Retrieved May 1, 2009.
- [4]. Gracová, Drahomíra (2015). "HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION" (PDF). GRANT Journal. 4: 33–38.
- [5]. McKenzie, J., Neiger, B., Thackeray, R. (2009). Health education can also be seen as preventive medicine (Marcus 2012). Health Education and Health Promotion. *Planning, Implementing, & Evaluating Health Promotion Programs*. (pp. 3-4). 5th edition. San Francisco, CA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- [6]. Donatelle, R. (2009). Promoting Healthy Behavior Change. *Health: The basics*. (pp. 4). 8th edition. San Francisco, CA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- [7]. *International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach*(PDF). Paris: UNESCO. 2018. p. 82. ISBN 978-92-3-100259-5.