

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Communication” is a basis of all social-intercourse. The process of communication is intimately connected with the overall fabric of the social system. Communication plays a vital role in many health promotion programs such as in the form of “health education”. Effective health education programs influence health behavior, health status and the quality of life of people who are either healthy or ill.

Among those who are ill, the hospital or health center is the first entry point, the most potential source of education. Hospitals can provide access to large target group and have available program resources. The issue is whether the hospitals have utilized these opportunities to develop educational programs. It is known that major roles of hospital mostly focus on curative services rather than education and information services. It has been accepted that health professional should place more concern in providing proper health education and information for patients. We need to know whether there are any obstacle that limit the hospital's role in health education such as i.e. hospital policy and management, readiness of health professional (knowledge, skills, attitudes, time etc.) and health education methods etc..

This study will focus on identifying the obstacles related to and impeding health education methods in hospitals. The target group of the study is pregnant women with HIV, as it is known that HIV infection is a crisis event in individuals' life especially while pregnancy. Both pregnancy and HIV problems are dynamic; there is a potential to have complications from time to time. These pregnant women therefore need both physical and psychological support.

Health education and support at the ANC is one of the approaches that can improve or maintain health status of these pregnant women. This study will propose using of group process education and peer support as an alternative approach to respond to the needs of target women. The proposed intervention will also enhance the utilization of hospital resources and increase concern of target hospital in improving health education activities. The expected outputs of the group approach are the **increasing of knowledge, skills and reducing psychological problems i.e. anxiety and depression**. It is expected that these factors will increase the **ability of target women** in adopting healthy life-styles. The ultimate outcomes of the study will be the increasing ability of these women to have normal lives for the rest of their lives. This will effect the fewer burdens to the social and health care system.

The major content of this paper has been divided into three parts; essay, proposal and data exercise. **Each part is related to the others but has separate details**. Chapter II is the essay part, which discusses and provided an overview problems of pregnant women with HIV. The Bio-psycho-social Model has been applied to discuss the determining factors to health status of the target pregnant. In relation to

this model, the discussion will focus on behavioral factors. The association among health education, communication factors and behavioral change will be presented. The Social Cognitive Model (Bandura, 1986) will be applied to explain the association of cognitive knowledge in personal factors and influence of peer support as an environmental factors to behavioral change. The research problem or problems of health education methods in hospital will be discussed. The end of the essay part provides details of group process education and conclusion.

Chapter III is the proposal. The purpose of this chapter is to apply the ideas and conclusion from the essay to real implementing. The target area is Nopparat Rajathani and the rationale and problems statement is discussed. It should be noted that this proposal has been developed in close co-operation and with participation from the staff of the target hospital.

The study design, one group with pre-post tests, has been proposed on the basis of appropriateness and readiness of the involved staff. There are two major objectives in the study: administrative and learning objectives. The administrative objectives focuses on identifying the appropriateness and effectiveness in using group process education in target hospital. The learning objectives focuses on assessing the educational outputs which includes knowledge, skills and some psychological factors of pregnant women in adopting healthy behaviors. There are two major activities, group process education will be held on every Wednesday afternoon after regular ANC activities. In addition, the project will provide funds to initiate group activities such as sewing, handicraft works, herbal promotion and a saving fund for delivery and post-

partum planning. These group activities will be based on interest and readiness of members. It is expected that peer support functions will reduce distress and anxiety and enhance the effectiveness of group education discussion.

Project activities will be the integration of education and counseling activities. In this regard, a working committee consisting of ANC staff, counseling unit and hospital health educators has been formed. The committee will be directly responsible for project activities. Major ethical concerns for this study are informed consent and confidentiality as well as the willingness of individual pregnant women to participate in-group activities. Another major concern is that activities should not create burden or interfere with the regular responsibilities of staff involved.

Project monitoring will examine **group's communication pattern and functioning as well as the satisfaction of members** toward group. Pre-post tests will be conducted to measure knowledge, skills, motivation, depression and anxiety level of group members. The pregnant women, the working committee, and the Monitoring and Evaluation unit of the hospital, researcher and external expertise will involve evaluation of the activities. The total project cost is Baht 70,000 excluding the in-kind support such as personnel, supplies and equipment etc. The hospital has been mobilized in-kind and cash total of Baht 20,000 from private sectors such as milk companies and the saving contribution from some pregnant women with HIV.

After the project ends, the proposed intervention has a high potential to be self-sustaining either through the health education media that will be produced from the project budget, fund raising from support group activities, and most of all the hospital's existing regular budget.

Chapter IV is data exercise, which represents the need assessment of the proposal part. The objective of data exercise is to collect information related to need and interest of target group in health education. Meanwhile, it will also assess to hospital statistics and the existing health education system of the hospital. Four data collection techniques have been demonstrated i.e. interview questionnaires, focus group discussion, reviewing secondary data and general group meeting. Data collection is also a tool to test the appropriateness and effectiveness of each data collection technique to be obtained during the rest of the project life. The result of data exercise has been used in both technical and logistical planning.

Major findings relating to pregnant women with HIV have confirmed the needs for initiating group process and support activities. The active participation of target group in focus group discussion also indicated the feasibility in organizing group process education. Exploring ideas through general group meeting gave a lot of benefits in program planning and logistical preparation.

Chapter V contains the presentation to be made during the thesis examination. It will consist of transparencies of information and major recommendations of the thesis committee. The annotated bibliography and appendices are enclosed after this chapter.

It is expected that the study will provide ideas in organizing group process education and group support at ANC clinic in hospital. Lessons learned could benefit the target hospital and other hospitals that have similar target group characteristics and similar hospital organizations.