

Enhancing Recovery and Reducing Severe Acute Malnutrition through Effective Management at Primary Care Level

SJW Withanage^{1#}, S Dias¹, G Nawagattegama¹, GRNN Waidyarathna², and A Karunanayake³

¹Medical Officer of Health Egodauyana, Ministry of Health, Colombo, Sri Lanka

²Faculty of Medicine, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Rathmalana, Sri Lanka

³Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna, Galle, Sri Lanka

#sankha06@hotmail.com

Abstract

Inadequate nutrition counseling is a significant problem associated with malnutrition. The intervention aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of nutrition counseling and the increased number of nutrition clinics at the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) level among 6 months to 6 year old children. The sample size was 44 children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). World Health Organisation criteria and child health development records were used to determine severe acute malnutrition (weight-for-height Z score < -3). Nutrition counseling and feeding practices were given to the mothers and the public health midwives of the Egodauyana MOH area. Eggs and animal-origin protein consumption were highlighted. Specially planned four nutrition clinics were conducted every week in the MOH area. Nutritional and frequent clinical follow-ups were done for 6 months. Re-evaluation of their weight and height was done after 3 months using the same criteria mentioned above. Among 44 children diagnosed with SAM (mean SAM period 4.6 months, 2.3 Standard Deviation), 33 children recovered through a meticulously planned high-energy diet. Fifteen (34.1%) received exclusive follow-ups at the MOH nutrition clinic. Fifteen (34.1%) were monitored by both the hospital and the MOH clinic. Three (6.8%) children recovered in the private sector. Eleven (25%) children showed no improvement in weight at the end of the 6 month follow-up period. SAM decreased from 15 to 2, which was exclusively and effectively managed by the MOH level, including meticulous high-energy diets and follow-up clinics that facilitated recovery from SAM.

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