

33 Referral to health facilities

OVERVIEW



In many cases of sickness in an epidemic, the patient cannot be treated at home or by volunteers or family. They will need specialized medical care and will have to go to a health clinic or a hospital.

What you need KNOW

- ➔ Know how to tell when someone is severely sick with the disease. Know the symptoms and guidelines for action.
- ➔ Know where the health facilities close to your community are. Know what capacity each one has and how to get to them. Do they have any ambulances? Can they be reached by public transport?
- ➔ Talk to health professionals and agree with them on an appropriate means to send sick people from the community to the health facilities.
- ➔ When doing disease surveillance, always keep the idea of referral in mind.

Use community message(s): 24

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What you can DO

- ➔ Learn the symptoms of the disease causing the epidemic and when they need referral to health facilities.
- ➔ Visit health facilities and talk to doctors and nurses, tell them about your activities and how you plan to do the referrals. Take advice from them.
- ➔ Decide on what methods are available for referral. Are there ambulances? Know how to call them. Is there public transport? Can the National Society provide transport? Do people have money to pay for transport?
- ➔ Always carry the relevant disease tool with you when you are doing surveillance so you can check the information about the disease and its symptoms.
- ➔ Always explain clearly to the family what the disease is, what the symptoms are and why you think referral is needed. Give them information about the health facilities available and what means of transportation are possible.



A volunteer talking to a health professional