

Community-bound Syndrome: An Important Issue in Community Medicine

Viroj Wiwanitkit

Department of Community Medicine, Dr. DY Patil University, Pune, Maharashtra, India

The community medicine mainly deals with the medical and public health problem in the community. Community is a big scale of the groups of people, larger than the family. The concept to manage community as a unit is important in community medicine. To deal with a problem in community scale, there must be the good community manipulation. Referring to the individual and family scales, there are specific problems for individual level, and family level that is known as individual disorder and family disorder. For the community scale, there is also a specific community problem. The community-bound syndrome is the specific syndrome seen in the specific community and usually related to the community background.

The community bound syndrome can be seen in several forms. The first well-known form is the disease that occurs in the community in the form of outbreak or epidemic. If the problem attacks the whole community, it is usually related to the community background. For example, the toxic or contaminated environment in the community might cause the outbreak of intoxication. This can affect the people living in that community and sometimes the animals in that area. The case of the village affected by contaminated heavy metal from a nearby area is a good situation.^[1] The other example is the occurrence of infectious disease in the community. In the past, the whole village might be affected by the same pathogen such as the case of cholera outbreak.^[2] In some community, the local culture and tradition also promote the occurrence of infectious disease. For example, in the northeast region of Thailand, the local culture is eating local fish, and it promotes the liver fluke infection in the communities in this area.^[3] In fact, the local traditional eating pattern strongly related to some illnesses in the communities. Some vegetarian communities might have the high incidence of anemia.^[4]

In addition to the form of the physical disorder, the community-bound syndrome might be any syndrome in the group of culture bounded disease.^[5] This is a specific

problem with psychospiritual background. The problem of spiritual processing illness is the good example. This problem is common in several communities with a long history and usually related to local ritual and religious belief. Sometimes, the local culture also affects the pattern of disease management. The local folk way of disease care can be seen and sometimes becomes strange. The dance to cure the disease in Sri Lanka is a good example.^[6] As a practitioner in community medicine, one should recognize the existence of community-bounded problem and should manage the problem in the community scale. Community diagnosis and community participation and collaboration are the key points for successful management of the problem.

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Address for correspondence:

Viroj Wiwanitkit, Dr. DY Patil University, Pune, Maharashtra, India. E-mail: wviroj@yahoo.com

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