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திகதி } 20.06.2013
Date }

All Provincial Director of Health Services
All Regional Director of Health Services
All Heads of Institutions

Establishing satellite dermatology clinics to improve leprosy services

As you are aware around 2000 new leprosy patients reported every year for the last 10 years. Of these patients, about 26 % are having some kind of disability due to leprosy at the time of diagnosis which is high when compared to countries in the region. This fact is attributed to late diagnosis of the disease where 56% of new patients are diagnosed late (more than 6 months) after appearance of first symptoms.

There is around 9% of child cases (less than 15 years) indicating the active transmission of disease in the community from undiagnosed individuals. Also more than 30% of patients do not complete treatment on time. These defaulting patients not only spread the disease in the community, but have a higher risk of developing drug resistance and relapses.

In the National Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015, it has been recommended to establish at least one satellite dermatology clinic per district to improve accessibility to patients in order to reduce the delay in diagnosis and improve treatment compliance. A satellite dermatology clinic should be conducted at least once a month by a visiting Consultant Dermatologist. College of Dermatologists have already consented to provide their fullest support for such clinics. Necessary drugs including MDT should be issued to all diagnosed patients with leprosy.

Therefore, please take necessary steps to establish satellite dermatology clinics in suitable institutions depending on to the leprosy case distribution.

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