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Message from Deputy Commissioner (Immunization)

With the success of Small Pox eradication, the Immunization programme was implemented in a more organized manner as Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) in 1978 targeting under 5 year children only in urban areas. In 1985 Immunization programme expanded as Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) with focus for under 1 year children, expansion of cold chain etc. The program reached every corner of the country in 1990 and now the program has become an integral part of India's public health infrastructure.

The last five years has seen a dramatic change in the landscape of routine immunization with new vaccines being introduced, the vaccination schedule for Measles and JE changed to 2 dose schedule, open vial policy implemented, strengthening of AEFI system etc. Implementation has been strengthened with capacity building of personnel as well as improvements in service delivery.

One of the key instruments for building capacity of medical officers has been the "Immunization handbook" which provides essential information, guidelines and exercises for skill development of medical officers.

The 3rd edition has grown in both size and content. This edition has been redesigned to serve two purposes, the first as the backbone for the three day MO immunization training and second as a reference for immunization in the field. All the information has been updated to reflect recent changes in policy and guidelines.

The Unit on microplanning has been rewritten to explain the step by step process of microplan development. This Unit includes GoI recommended RI formats at all levels from planning, head-counting and session due-listing at the sub-centre to consolidated formats for the PHC to give an overview of critical RI information on a single sheet. Efforts have been made to explain "how" each step is to be taken rather than what steps to take. Each format has its SOP sheet which explains each variable and how it is to be collected.

Three new Units have been included to cover capacity building, high-risk & urban areas and financial management. These critical areas have been included in response to the changing dynamics in demography, manpower and needs of the program.

References and links have been carefully selected from Government and WHO sites to enable the medical officers to access relevant guidelines and information needed to strengthen existing processes and improve outcomes.

I am certain that medical officers and the program will benefit from this edition of the immunization handbook.



(Dr. Pradeep Halder)