Terms of Reference

Subcommittee on Maternal and Child Nutrition

Introduction

The Subcommittee on Maternal and Child Nutrition (MCN) is established as the technical advisory body to make recommendations to the Nutrition Steering Committee (NSC) chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Health. The MCN subcommittee is chaired by the Deputy Director General Public Health Services II.

Sri Lanka has achieved very low maternal and child morbidity, mortality rates and a high life expectancy despite being classified as a lower middle income country. While being a model for other South Asian countries in this regard, maternal and child nutrition indicators in Sri Lanka require further improvement to be in par with the impressive achievements shown by such health and social indicators.

Maternal and child nutrition is already integrated into the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Programme of Sri Lanka and is delivered as a package of evidence based interventions in a cost-effective manner. The MCH programme is implemented by the Ministry of Health through the well established preventive and curative health systems. Despite all relevant evidence based interventions being implemented in the country, concerns regarding coverage, quality and equity still persist. Therefore the maternal and new born health review conducted in 2007 has recommended the establishment of a subcommittee to function as an advisory body of technical expertise on maternal and child nutrition to make recommendations on addressing these deficiencies.

Mandate

The subcommittee shall function as the technical advisory body for the programmes on maternal and child nutrition by streamlining and strengthening implementation of relevant evidence based interventions while addressing new challenges. The subcommittee will provide policy directives, technical guidance, advise and monitor National and Provincial programmes specially using the life cycle approach and shall make recommendations to NSC on issues related to improvements in maternal and child nutrition.
Responsibilities/scope

1. Recommend and provide guidance in the development, review/revision of all policies, strategies, guidelines, protocols and relevant documents in relation to maternal and child nutrition

2. Advice on policy formulation, planning, financial allocation, resource management and other relevant issues pertaining to MCN

3. Review, evaluate and give concurrence to all maternal and child nutrition related programmes, surveys, projects, new interventions, plans to be implemented by different agencies including NGO/INGO at different levels and make recommendations on important issues needing policy concurrence to the Nutrition Steering Committee for approval.

4. Function as a technical committee to identify, review and make recommendations for nutrition related research at all levels

5. Collect, collate and disseminate evidence based information on Maternal and Child Nutrition approved by the subcommittee

6. Liaise with relevant stakeholders and committees through appropriate advocacy and recommendations to facilitate and motivate interventions that have a bearing on improving maternal and child nutrition.
Composition

1. Deputy Director General - Public Health Services II (Chairperson)
2. Director - Maternal and Child Health (Secretary)
3. Director – Health Education Bureau
4. Director – Nutrition Co-ordination Division
5. Director – Nutrition
6. Director – Non Communicable Diseases
7. Director – Environmental and Occupational Health
8. Director – Estate and Urban Health
9. Deputy Director – Maternal and Child Health
10. Head – Department of Nutrition, MRI
11. CCP/Maternal care - FHB
12. CCP/Intra natal and Newborn care - FHB
13. CCP/Child Nutrition - FHB
14. CCP/School Health - FHB
15. CCP/Adolescent Health – FHB
16. CCP from Directorate of Nutrition
17. CCP from Directorate of Non Communicable Diseases
18. CCP(or representative) from FCAU of the Directorate of Environmental and Occupational Health
19. CCP from Directorate of Estate and Urban Health
20. Coordinator – Thriposha Programme
21. President or nominee from Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians
22. President or nominee from College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka
23. President or nominee from College of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians
24. Academic staff member from a Department of Paediatrics of a University
25. National Professional Officer - WHO
26. Chief - Health and Nutrition, Unicef
27. Representative from World Bank
28. Representative from WFP

Additional members will be co-opted when required.

Total number of members for the subcommittee is twenty eight (28) and the quorum is 09 members.
Functioning

- The committee will function under the Chairmanship of Deputy Director General Public Health Services II.
- The members to the committee will be decided by virtue of their designation and will be appointed by the DGHS for a period of two years. It is encouraged that only the members appointed by the DGHS participate at subcommittee meetings. In the event of a member being unable to attend, this should be informed beforehand and a representative should attend on behalf of the member.
- Director MCH will function as Secretary to the Committee and be responsible to schedule and facilitate meetings of the committee in liaison with DDG PHS II.
- D/MCH will be responsible to provide necessary facilities to conduct meetings.
- Conflict of interest: In an issue where a member has a conflict of interest, he/she should declare the conflict of interest and refrain from the decision making process of that issue.
- It is an obligation of the subcommittee members to maintain confidentially of information tabled at the subcommittee.
- Committee should meet once a month and the meetings should be held on fixed dates.
- The quorum for a meeting is 09 members.
- Members outside the MCN subcommittee can be co-opted as and when required to the MCN subcommittee.
- The chairperson could appoint technical subcommittees to address specific issues and members outside the MCN subcommittee can be co-opted for such committees.
- The Subcommittee should submit the progress and recommendations to the Nutrition Steering Committee chaired by Secretary Health.

Accountability

The Subcommittee on Maternal and Child Nutrition is accountable to the Nutrition Steering Committee chaired by Secretary Health.