

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES



**A GUIDE TO THE READERS OF THE IEC
HEALTH MATERIALS**

Directorate: Primary Health Care Services

Division: Information, Education and Communication

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PREFACE

The Guide to the Readers of the IEC (Information, Education and Communication) Health Materials is developed to meet the expectations of health information consumers who might require to be assisted to have access to health information and materials.

It is therefore hoped that this booklet will be used by health consumers who have discovered the potential of health information as a key to freedom from preventive and curative diseases. Treat this booklet like a valuable treasure that guides you to better health and therefore better life. The information the reader will have access to as a result of this booklet is a life saving one and should be used to save others with little knowledge regarding the power of information.

The readers are advised to use the service provided in the Division's dissemination unit to enable them to discover the value of information as well as being informed. The contents of this document should be read with care so that the readers will be able to contribute to the improvement of this guide in future.

Discover the IEC and enjoy the guidance you will obtain from this booklet.

Ms. M Nghatanga

Director: Primary Health Care Services



INTRODUCTION

The use of information in the Health Service System is a post independence development and has been a very important element in the dissemination of information relating to health and Disease, determination of health problems and the basis for developing health messages.

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) is a very strong tool in the in the improvement of the life styles of people and their health. It is against this background that health consumers are encouraged to cease the opportunity to use any available and informative health material that could enhance their way of healthy living.

BACKGROUND.

Pre-independence health information dissemination was something you could hear about in health education activities. These were institution-based activities or activities organized around racial backgrounds; the disadvantaged consumers of health only had health information if they visited a health facility or hospital.

Immediately after independence the Ministry of Health and Social Services deemed it fit to set a health information section by 1997 the section had developed into a Division. For the past few years the section served as the resource centre for all the regions. Later Oshakati IEC was developed. Until 2002 the centres served most of the regions with Oshakati serving most of the North Western regions. By 2002 Erongo, Otjozondjupa, Kavango, Caprivi, Khomas and Omaheke regions had come up with such centres to serve specific health regions. The IEC

national level still remains the co-ordinating centre for all these units.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE GUIDE TO THE READERS OF IEC HEALTH MATERIALS.

The objective of the document on the guide to readers of the IEC health materials is to help users of the IEC health information dissemination centre to find their way to the centre. The document aims at making the dissemination centre more reader friendly by giving relevant information about the centre.

MISSION STATEMENT.

Informing at all times; at all levels.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE IEC?

For an adventurous reader it is important to equip her or himself with relevant information in regard to the IEC. Some of the issues one should know about are:

WHERE IS THE IEC DIVISION?

The IEC Division of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, is a Division within the Directorate of the Primary Health Care Services (PHCS).

The IEC is situated in Block B just opposite Block A. Visits to the Dissemination room can be done only during working hours (08H00-13H00 and 14H00-17H00) as the Division is closed after hours, during holidays and weekends.

Who can use the IEC? The IEC is open to all members of the Public including institutions that have interest in the health and

welfare of the nation and in particular the communities of Namibia.

Why read the IEC health materials? The IEC health materials are valuable materials designed to inform, educate and where possible change the behaviour of the users to the better.

MISSION STATEMENT.

Informing at all; at all health care levels.

THE COMPONENTS OF THE IEC DIVISION?

The Division is composed of the following Sub-Divisions:

👉 The Material Development and Distribution Sub-Division.

This section is responsible for the development and distribution of IEC materials that are rich in health information that can have a positive health effect on individuals, groups, families and community health.

Staff:

There are two senior health programme administrators with one typist.

👉 Electronic and Print Media Section.

This is the blood and flesh of the Material Development and Distribution section. It is the section responsible for the design, layout, print and final production of materials. In the absence of human resources and equipments in this section the Sub-Division Material Development and

Distribution section suffers, which subsequently affects other subdivisions and programmes.

Staff:

The section had one member on the staff establishment, who was assisted by a graphics artist contracted by UNICEF. The post has been advertised and will be filled soon.

 **Social Mobilization and Marketing Subdivision.**

This is a section that is responsible for the dissemination of health messages at all levels of health. The section if well structured is the key player in the mobilization and motivation of communities to accept health programmes as well as appreciate the services rendered in the Health Services System. All sections in the health system are welcome to use this section.

Staff:

There is one senior programme administrator responsible for management as well the operational activities of the section.

 **Audience Research and Pre-testing Subdivision.**

The Audience Research section is responsible for collection of information or data on which health messages are based.

This is the forerunner subdivision for information development and dissemination. Without this Sub-

Division it would not be easy to obtain necessary information suitable for health messages acceptable to individuals, families and groups.

It is therefore important for this section to be staffed with a person with a good research background and relevant experience.

Staff:

This section does not yet have staff. The post is in the process of being advertised. Most of the activities relating to this section are shared between the Social Mobilization and Material Development and Distribution subdivisions.

☞ **The Administrative Support Section.**

The administrative support section is responsible for most of the administrative activities in the Division. The procurement and management of materials and equipment is the principal function of this section. The procurement of equipment and materials should be done in co-operation with the relevant subdivisions.

Staff:

There has been one member who served as a Division Clerk. Due to changes in the Directorate she had to be transferred to NACOP. The post is currently not filled and will be advertised as soon as possible.

HOW TO GET MATERIALS FROM THE IEC?

Materials can be obtained directly from the IEC or through a request to the responsible people who would assist in

getting materials from the material room. *Visitors should not be allowed into the Dissemination room without an escort.*

The place is open from **08H00-17H00**. Entry is only per permission of the serving officer. All those willing to use the centre should make sure they make an appointment with the relevant officer before they visit the centre.

The materials available are accessible to all members of the public who can read or have to engage somebody to read the material for them. The information in the leaflet is very important and it does not deserve to be treated as simple information. It is information that can change life styles and thus keep people free from preventable ill-health.

Any member of the public interested can contact the centre at the address or telephone on the cover of the leaflet.

SOME OF THE MATERIALS FOUND AT THE IEC.

The materials listed below can be found at IEC Ministry of Health and Social Services:

1. Policies for different programmes.
2. Leaflets in English and local languages on relevant health issues.
3. Posters on different conditions.
4. Ministry of Health Calendar of events.
5. Booklets.
6. Text Books.

7. Research documents.
8. Reports.
9. Surveys.
10. Materials on special events.

Other materials can be obtained on request direct from the relevant programmes.

