

17th August, 1988.

All Heads of Institutions.

ELIGIBILITY FOR STERILIZATION

It has been observed that a significant proportion of females who have undergone sterilization are under 25 years of age, with a notable number being less than 20 years. Acceptance of a permanent method of contraception at a young age could lead to regrets. Also a significant proportion of females/males had undergone sterilization with two children, the last child still being very young.

In view of these observations it was thought appropriate to enforce a minimum requirement before considering on a sterilization. The criteria for selection for a sterilization should therefore be –

- (i) The clients should be over 26 years of age and should have at least 2 living children; the younger being over 2 years of age. Confirmation of mother's age should be done by checking the Birth Certificate, Identity Card or any other valid document, which is available.
- (ii) Clients who are over 26 years of age and having 3 or more living children could be sterilized at any time
- (iii) A client under 26 years of age, and his /her spouse insist on a sterilization, the Medical Officer concerned could use his/her discretion, and perform the sterilization provided the couple has a minimum of 3 living children. In such a situation the officer concerned should personally check the validity of the information provided, in respect of the number of living children, prior to performing the sterilization.
- (iv) In the event of any medical indication, which warrants sterilization, the client should be referred to a specialist in the relevant field who should make the final decision.

It is important that the officer performing the sterilization (Tubectomy/Vasectomy) is satisfied that the client requesting sterilization has met the above requirements and is eligible for a tubectomy or a vasectomy.

All officers performing sterilizations both in the Government and the Non-Governmental Organisations should ensure that the above requirements are met prior to performing the operation.

Director (Maternal & Child Health)

Sgd. Dr. Joe Fernando
Director General of Health Services