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My No DDG/PHS/90/2005
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All Provincial Secretaries of Health
All Provincial Directors of Health Services
All Deputy Provincial Directors of Health Services
All Officers In Charge Of Medical Institutions.
Director National Institute of Health Science
All Medical Officers Maternal and Child Health
All Directors of special programmes
Chief MOH Municipal council, Colombo
All Medical Officers of Health

Adolescent Health

Responsible organization within the Ministry of Health

Adolescence is defined as the age group between 10-19 years and according to population estimates there are 3.7 million adolescents in Sri Lanka. This is about 20% of the total population and of this 73% are attending schools.

At present a number of partners within the Ministry of Health are involved in implementation of various programmes related to adolescents leading to overlapping, inefficient use of resources and confusion among health and educational officials at all levels. Therefore it is important to identify a focal point responsible for the overall National Adolescent Health Programme for its smooth and efficient functioning. Hence, the ministry of Health care & Nutrition has taken the initiative to identify a suitable focal point for the adolescent health programme.

The Family Health Bureau, already being the focal point for the Child Health programme (0 -18 years) was involved in adolescent health activities since 1990 and has been instrumental in implementing adolescent health activities including establishment of the National Steering Committee for adolescent health till late nineties. Considering program relevance and the above factors, the Family Health Bureau could be considered as the most appropriate institution to act as the focal point for Adolescent Health Programme as well.

Therefore, the Ministry of Health care & Nutrition has taken a decision to identify the Family Health Bureau as the focal point for the National Adolescent Health programme within the Ministry of Health. With this development the preview of the Child Health programme will be expanded to include both school and out of school adolescents . Its policies and strategies will also be reoriented to accommodate the expansion. All other directorates of the Ministry of Health viz: Directorate of the Youth, Elderly, Disabled and Displaced, Non Communicable Diseases, National HIV/AIDS control Programme, Health Education Bureau and Mental Health, will be considered as partners of the programme within the Ministry of Health.

However, there should be close coordination between the focal point and other partners within and outside the ministry responsible for adolescent health activities *in order* to provide a good quality service for adolescents in the country.


Dr. H.A.P. Kanandaliyanage

Secretary, Ministry of Health Care & Nutrition

Copies to: Secretary, Ministry of Education
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Director General of Health Services.
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DDG, Dental services, Ministry of Health Care & Nutrition
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Country Representative, World Bank
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