



Role of Social Worker in the Rehabilitation of Victims of Natural Disaster

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Abstract

The role of social worker in rehabilitation of victims of Natural Disasters is very important as they need physical and psychological support in order to achieve dignified life aftermath of crisis. Natural Disaster produces significant impact on the life of sufferers. Loss of life, property, disability, death results mental agony. Medical Social Worker plays a significant role by working in systematic and methodological approach.

Key words: *Social Work, Natural Disaster, Rehabilitation, Psychological support, Public Health*

Natural disaster, crises aftermath

Natural disasters like cyclones, floods, earthquakes, and fires create conditions in which hundreds of thousands of persons become victims each year.¹ Victims after natural disasters were reported to have symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder.²

Disabilities among disaster victims are common. Heart attacks as well as physical injury related to disasters can lead to permanent disability conditions which require assistance in order for the victim to return to work.¹

Natural disasters are crises, and a crisis is a time-limited period of psychological disequilibrium in victims, precipitated by a sudden and significant change in individual life situations.³ That life situation change can be represented by loss of home, which leads to feeling of insecurity and vulnerability in the loss of privacy and treasured possessions. These persons are thrown into situations where they must lodge themselves in temporary shelters, without restrooms or cooking arrangements, and with poor sleeping conditions. The loss of home can extend to loss of community

and employment, with concomitant loss of support and income.

The injury and death associated with natural disasters makes an imprint on the person's mind, with that imprint taking the nature of guilt for not doing enough, or of fear and anxiety. It has pointed out that denial and anger are frequent concomitants of disasters.⁴

Social workers and their role and approach in health care delivery and rehabilitation of natural disaster victims⁵

Health according to social workers defined as a state or condition, in which an individual is capable to utilize all the capacities of his social living. The profession of social work is a powerful weapon to realize comprehensive and qualitative health care delivery in order to minimize psychological and social impact of disease on person's life. It is the application and adoption of the method and philosophy of social work in the field of health and medical care. It deals with the social, physical and psychological aspects of patient. It is based on the assumption of the individual's dignity. Treatment is not the final solution for illness. Medical social work studies the diseased person that is social aspect of the disease. Medical social work deals with the prevention of disease, after care of the patients and social rehabilitation of patients and not just limited to treatment of disease. Social workers in health care delivery system discover the social and psychological background of a patient, make the

patient free from his psychological tensions, and discover the psychological factors of the illness.

Working concept of Medical Social Worker aftermath of natural disaster

- Medical social work deals with the those problems of the victims which are related to the physical and psychological environment
- It is oriented towards the assistance of those victims, who during their treatment face social, physical, economic and psychological problems

Working principle of Medical Social Worker aftermath of Natural disaster

These are mainly social techniques and mostly humanitarian in nature

1. By enabling the victims for solving his problems (building up his capacities)
2. By determining the social and psychological influence
3. By developing the willpower and determination of the victim
4. By enabling the victim to adjust with the problems
5. By developing proper environment

Working methods of Medical Social Worker

1. Case study method

- By, case study method, social worker collects information with

regard to the specific needs of the victim and works towards their fulfillment in accordance with the available means

2. Direct assistance method

- Social worker is directly involved in the assistance
- Medical social worker tries at strengthening the social relations of the victim and works towards the development of a healthy social environment

3. Indirect method of assistance

Indirect assistance method includes following approach

1. Community organization

- organization of community resources with regard to health problem by social worker

2. Social administration

- Social worker guides the public opinion for enactment of new social legislations or any amendment in prevailing legislations

3. Social security and insurance

- enabling the victim to utilize the facilities under social security and insurance by social worker

4. Social action

- Social worker participates in the movements of social action at the national (national health program involvement) and international levels(world health days)

5. Social work research

- Social worker inspires surveys and investigations regarding the social ,economic and psychological problems of the victims

Conclusion

The role of social worker in the rehabilitation of victims of natural disasters is very important and helps in their social and psychological rehabilitation with a systematic and methodological approach. Medical Social work is a very powerful and essential branch of medicine for realizing a comprehensive and qualitative health care.

Social workers has greater role in rehabilitation of disability, social and psychological impact due to trauma associated with natural disasters. Quality of life and psychosocial adjustment is of vital importance to persons whose life quality has deteriorated and medical social worker has significant role to be played for them.

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