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# Official update from the DGHS Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition on IDP Healthcare as of 7th July

Wednesday, 15 July 2009

Last Updated Wednesday, 15 July 2009

As promised in our previous communiqué, we will be issuing weekly updates on the current status of IDP healthcare. The following are the developments as of 7th July, 2009.

Improving the administrative infrastructure in Cheddikulam is necessary for us to provide services in an efficient manner and we have been fortunate to get the assistance from various organizations to fund our needs. To facilitate communication within Manik Farm, 6 extra CDMA phones have been purchased to be distributed among consultants working in the zones. The IDP Coordination Centre is also being extended to accommodate the growing number of staff assigned to Cheddikulam. We previously mentioned that one of the challenges we faced was placement of nurses and doctors at the IDP camps. New consultant paediatrician has now been allocated to all zones. A permanent Visiting Obstetrician and Gynaecologist (VOG) has also been assigned to Base Hospital (BH) Cheddikulam (the closest hospital to the six zones) along with two senior registrars. The registrars will rotate on a weekly roster and will help to ensure the obstetric referral system that is now in place will function smoothly. Placement of doctors close to welfare centres has been difficult due to the relative lack of housing, water, toilets and recreation for them in the field. Steps are being taken to address these issues. Water supply is being improved at the doctor's quarters and at the Health Coordination Centre in Cheddikulam by adding 5,000L tanks for water storage and 2,000L tanks to pump water. Steps are also being taken to make the quarters more acceptable to the doctors with the support of several organisations. Other organizations have also volunteered to look into providing recreational facilities for health personnel who are working in the field. MOH is pleased to announce that family health clinics with emergency delivery facilities are being established within each zone by UNFPA. Tents which can house 10 beds will be supplied by next week (one tent in each zone). The emergency delivery facilities will have 5 to 6 midwives on a roster basis. In addition, 2 antenatal clinics with a medical centre and 2 postnatal wards are being organized for each zone. These clinics will be run by provincial healthcare teams who will be visiting these centres. Two mobile ultrasound scanning machines have also been allocated to Manik Farm which will reduce the burden on BH Cheddikulam. Upgrading and improving facilities at BH Cheddikulam is a continuing process because it went from serving a population of 20,000 to one over 250,000 within a short period of time. A permanent operating theatre will be opened on 20th July 2009. Until this time, a temporary operating theatre which was opened last month will continue to function. A Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist was appointed on the 6th of July 2009. Two paediatricians have also been assigned to BH Cheddikulam. Wards and residential facilities for staff are being improved in both quality and quantity at BH Cheddikulam. Currently construction has begun to extend the paediatric, gynaecology and obstetric and surgical wards. These will be opened on 31st September, 2009. In order to address the need for better water quality at BH Cheddikulam, UNICEF has granted a water purification unit which will be operational within the next 2 to 3 days. Facilities and equipment at General Hospital (GH) Vavuniya have been improved from the very beginning of the humanitarian crisis as it had an influx of IDP patients. Recently, a haematology analyzer was installed in the hospital which will allow for more rapid lab testing and investigation. Identifying new sources of water, building more latrines, addressing garbage disposal, fly control and drainage of surface water are all priority health activities for MOH. We are pleased that construction of 1,000 latrines is underway at the IDP camps with the aid of the Italian government. Other government entities and organizations are also working to address the issues listed above. Disease surveillance is officially taking place. Information on communicable diseases is collected by the Medical Officer In-Charge (MOIC) in each zone in Cheddikulam and other camps in Vavuniya. Immunization activities, investigation of outbreaks and preparation of guidelines are activities taking place for disease management and prevention. The Health Education Bureau (HEB) with the support of NGOs (Canadian RC and TDh Swiss) is planning health and hygiene promotion activities in the zones to strengthened the existing activities done by the HEB. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our international and local partners who are helping us achieve our objectives and plans for improving healthcare at the IDP welfare villages for their support and perseverance. Please see our website [www.health.gov.lk](http://www.health.gov.lk) for more information.