

SEVENTH MEETING OF DIRECTORS OR
REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOOLS OF
PUBLIC HEALTH.

Iran, 3-10 March 1977.

SUMMARY REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF ACTIVITIES
AT ^{SH} DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE, GARYUNIS
UNIVERSITY BENGHAZI, LIBYA.

A. Name

Full title of school : Faculty of Medicine,
Garyunis University,
Benghazi, Libya.
Administering Institution : Garyunis University.
City & Country : BENGHAZI, LIBYA.
Year public health
course started : 1974 - 1975

B. Number of teaching staff :

Full time Three, One Egyptian, one Pakistanian and
the third Libyan.

Part time —

Double appointment from within the University :

Lecturers from outside the University :

Two lecturers participated in the course last year

Professor A. Christie

Honorary Physician, Fazakerley hospital, Liverpool

Dr. A. El Sherif: Formerly Undersecretary at the
Ministry of Public Health, Libya and at the moment
Head of the Teaching Health Institutions, Benghazi.

C. Student body :

<u>Degree of M.B.B.S.</u>	Course of community medicine
- duration of Course	: 12 months
- number graduated 1975/76	: 31 students
	30 nationals, 1 from other countries
- total number studying, academic year 1976/77	: 56 nationals, 6 from other countries
in department of community medicine.	

- total number studying academic year 1976/1977 in department of community medicine 57 nationals 6 from other countries
- new enrolment in faculty of medicine academic year 1976/1977 97 nationals 7 from other countries

Degree of M.B.B.S.

Course of medical statistics for 1st year medical students

- duration of course one academic year
- number of students 55 nationals 13 from other countries

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- total number studying at Benghazi Medical School academic year 1976/1977 435 nationals 79 from other countries
 - number of years of study for M.B.B.S. Degree 5 years in addition to a preliminary year

D. Teaching activities

1. New teaching activities:

- during academic year 1975/1976 the department has undertaken to give the course of medical statistics to the first year medical students.
- during academic year 1976/77 The department has begun a programme of training of the graduates of the medical school for one month in community medicine during their year of internship utilising the health services at the city of Benghazi. A group of them comes every month during the year in rotation. The site of the training is in one of the polyclinics. The stress is mainly put on the concept of "comprehensive community approach". The interns are involved in the periodical medical examination and follow up of the health of the families living in a district near the polyclinic. The

district has been surveyed by the Department and each family has got a family health folder with a file for each of its members. The interns are to be trained in the primary health care of different groups of the community (mothers, children, middle aged etc.) and in home visiting and health education. They are again trained in techniques of mass screening for early and quick detection of disease in different groups of the population. Special stress is put on their role to "inspire, educate and guide the people in the district, so that they develop this community desire for health development and are ready to participate actively in its promotion and implementation", as Dr. Mahler puts it.

2. Summary of teaching activities in various disciplines offered

- a. a course in community medicine for one year to the fourth year medical students.
- b. a course in medical statistics for one academic year to the first year medical students.
- c. a programme of training of interns in community medicine for one month in rotation during their year of internship after graduation.

E. Research activities

- a. A follow-up study of the picture of health of the middle age groups in a representative sample of the population at Benghazi.
- b. A study of the problem of virus hepatitis, which is the disease on the top of the list of infectious diseases in Libya.
- c. A study in a pilot area at Benghazi to try to find the most advisable approach to lower the incidence of rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart.
- d. A study of the epidemiology of hydatid cyst disease in Benghazi.
- e. The study of the epidemiology of cancer in the eastern part of Libya. A cancer registry is organised to register all cases of cancer that occur in the region. A team of pathologists carry out the examination of the specimens and an epidemiological study is done for every case.
- f. There is a project to carry out a survey for diabetes in Benghazi and its surroundings.
- g. A study programme to define and reorient the health priorities in Libya according to their social relevance to the entire population. This study is done in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.

F. Service activities

The department of community medicine is contributing to the administration of medical services at Benghazi. The head of the department is acting at the same time as the director of medical services at the Teaching Health Institutions Board. This board is financed by both the University of Gar-Yunis and the Ministry of Health and is given the responsibility of the administration of all the hospitals and medical care services at Benghazi to suit the needs of teaching medical students, interns and registrars at the Faculty of Medicine and to administer the successive levels of medical and health care in a uniform standard to the whole population of the area.

G. Co-operation and collaboration

- a. There is a programme of cooperation between the Faculty of Medicine Gar Yunis University and the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine to carry out defined research projects in the major health problems.
- b. An agreement has been made that some of the students taking the course of community health arranged by Professor N.R.S. Fendall (the head of the department of tropical community health at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine) will carry out their field study (the overseas component of the course) at Benghazi, in one of polyclinics and that the department of community medicine at Benghazi will take them 'under its wing' and contribute to their training.
- c. A project is being developed with the cooperation of Dr. Turner from Glasgow, Scotland and Dr. Z. Pisa, the chief of cardiovascular diseases, W.H.O. Geneva for the prevention of rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease in Libya. A pilot area is chosen to try to find the most advisable and economical approach to lower the incidence of this disease.
- d. A project is being developed with the cooperation of Professor Woodruff at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

to carry out a study of "hydatid cyst disease" in Libya. The disease is prevalent and is one of the health problems in this country.

- e. A number of teaching staff from different institutions had come in pre-arranged visits to Benghazi and had contributed to the teaching of students and had acted as external examiners in final examinations. Among these is Prof. Gilles; professor of tropical medicine at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Prof. A.B. Christie, honorary physician, Fazakerley hospital, Liverpool, and Prof. J.F.B. Edeson, Professor of tropical health, American University of Beirut.

G.1 The disciplines in the department in which we are ready to offer co-operation and collaborations are

- a. community medicine,
- b. epidemiology.

G.2 The disciplines in which the department would like to receive cooperation and collaboration from other schools are:

- a. system analysis and health management
- b. serological studies especially for plague and tularaemia

H. Objectives

H.1.a. Objectives of department in teaching and training:

The department is essentially involved in the teaching and training of medical students studying for the M.B.,B.S. Degree. The medical school had graduated, last year, the first batch of doctors. Previously, most of the Libyan medical practitioners used to get their undergraduate and post-graduate medical education either in Egypt or in one of the European countries like Britain, Italy or Germany or Turkey or in the United States. The health and medical services of the country are administered mainly by a large number of medical and paramedical staff recruited from foreign countries.

Our job, therefore, is to train the medical people that will in future build up the health services in Libya. Our main objective is to make them believe in a "philosophy of health development in their country, both contributing to and benefiting from social and economic development" according to the plea of Dr. H. Mahler, Director General of W.H.O. in his address to the Regional Committees. In their training as students and interns they are motivated "to involve the community in finding solutions for their own health problems". They are prepared in a way as to make them able to lead and contribute to the "setting in motion the national health developmental process" and "to maintain it as a truly joint effort of all the social and economic sectors concerned". During their course they are continuously motivated, through teaching and training experience to believe in the two principles that, Dr. Mahler believes, should guide a policy for social revolution in public health, the "principle of equitable distribution of health resources" and "the principle of social penetration." That is why we always choose for their training the districts of the city that need most social, economic and health development. This is intended to make them learn practically the social pathology of disease, to impress them with the intimate relationship between social conditions and health and to convince them with the need to "initiate and maintain a continuing health developmental process as truly joint effort of all the social and economic sectors concerned." The political atmosphere in Libya encourages strongly these trends. However, one of the difficulties that we are meeting is that the number of students and graduates is still very small, and that they have therefore great chances of completing their post graduate education in developed countries like Britain and the United States and of specialising, along the western patterns, in the finest branches of medicine and surgery. There is a danger, therefore, that they would be most interested in investing the available resources in the adoption of health technology of the highest quality, which may be scarcely relevant to the real needs of the population.

The main emphasis in the teaching of community medicine is laid, therefore, on the importance of the concept of "comprehensive community approach" in facing the health problems of the country. Students are not only taught but they are also trained in institutions that deliver essential primary health care to the population. In many countries as Dr. Mahler says "health technology is either selected by individuals whose professional goals bear little resemblance to society's health needs, or it is accumulated in a fortuitous and haphazard fashion." The department of community medicine at Gar Yunis University is trying to shape the future medical practitioners in such a way as to avoid such a condition occurring in Libya. It is attempting to evolve better ways of "generating medical men and women who are properly attuned both technically and socially to the needs of the people they are to serve."

I. 1. b. The department of community medicine is also helping and will try to help more in future in the training of health auxiliaries. It participates in the training courses set for different health personnel. This, we believe, is very important to the future self-reliance on national health manpower. We try to have a role in the creation of health infra structures that can truly serve the needs of the people and can be depended upon in the delivery of primary essential health care and in carrying out national health programmes.

I.1.c. Objectives of department in research

The department is aiming at the study of the important health problems of the community. One of its objectives in research will be also to guide postgraduate students in epidemiological studies. The whole University and the medical school are involved in a programme of research that could help the plans for social economic and health development. The department is taking an active role in this programme. One of its objectives is to share in the reorientation of the country's health priorities according to their social relevance for the whole population.

1. d. Objectives of department in services

The department is taking an active responsibility in the administration of comprehensive medical and health services to the population of the city of Benghazi as described before. Our objective is to help plan the services, keeping in mind the two important principles of equitable distribution of health resources and of social penetration. In fact these two principles are essential features in the political principles of the country. All that is needed is to apply them to the administration of health services.

- 1.2. The objective of the department in teaching is to prepare the manpower suited to the needs of the people and the national health programme. Its objective in research is to find solutions for the health problems of the country and thus help orienting the health programmes. Its objective in services is to share in the planning and the administration of medical and health care according to sound principles.

2. The contribution of the department to national health and manpower planning and development.

We contribute to the orientation of the medical education in the medical school and we share in moulding the graduates according to the needs of the people as far as this is possible.

Again the department takes a part in the committees that are responsible for decisions on manpower planning and development.

3. The relationship of the department (producer) with the Ministry of Health and other organizations (consumers).

We have a close relationship with the Ministry of Health. Those who are responsible for planning of health and medical services at the Ministry of Health share in the teaching and examination at the department.

Again the department is taking an executive responsible role in the administration and planning of health and medical services at Benghazi. Moreover the Ministry of Health consults the department in the study of health questions and in field studies of certain diseases and in the planning of health programmes.

I. Plans for reorganisation and restructure of our school and department

The medical education in our school is following the patterns in highly developed countries. The main stress is on teaching in hospitals and on providing the highest standards of health technology. This is understood and expected. However, it would be most beneficial in the preparation of future medical practitioners, to produce them more attuned to the needs of the people and more anxious to serve the socially peripheral population in the country.

This could be achieved, we believe, if the students are exposed early in the medical education to the health problems of the community and if they get a great part of their training in community health centres rather than in specialised hospitals. It is hoped that this could be achieved gradually.