

AUSHADHI VATIKA (MEDICINAL PLANT FARM) IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE- AN OPERATIONAL PLAN

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Medicinal plants provide a rich, untapped and natural reservoir for the treatment of common ailments. Unfortunately in absence of organised usage, the therapeutic potential is not fully utilised. We propose a tentative operational plan for the utilisation of selected medicinal plants in primary health care. Selection of plants has to be on the basis of well-defined criteria such as availability, efficacy, safety, popularity and broad-spectrum usage. A formulary from these selected medicinal plants will be evolved for common ailments; plants will be grouped under common diseases i.e. Kutaj (*Hollarrhena antidysentrica*), Bilwa (*Aegle marmelos*), and Dhataki (*Woodfordia floribonda*) for diarrhea.

An operational plan for training and service at village level would comprise of

- (1) Short intense training of Gram Swasthya Rakshak (Village Health Worker) at Ayurvedic colleges and
- (2) Establishment of Gram Aushadhi Vatika (Village medicinal Plant Farm).

The functions of these unit will be; survey of medicinal plants in that area and identification, collection and cultivation, preservation, storage, distribution and usage and protection.

This unit should be interwoven with the existing primary health care delivery services.

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