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Examples of Tasks Performed by Primary Health Care Workers

In this chapter we give a few examples of General Tasks which might be undertaken by Primary Health Care (PHC) workers. By looking through these tasks a teacher may be reminded of some aspect of the work he has forgotten to include in his task list.

5.1 WHO PERFORMS PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TASKS?

As explained in chapter 1 PHC is different from curative hospital care and one of the main differences concerns who performs the tasks. In PHC, the tasks which promote health are performed by family members in the home and by the community in the village, as well as by the health workers (see table 1.1 in chapter 1). It follows from this that a central activity of the PHC worker is Health Education. The central task of the PHC worker is

| To advise and encourage the family and community |
| To undertake those tasks which promote health |

A PHC worker may be working in one or more of the elements of PHC (Nutrition, Water, Sanitation, Maternal Care and so on). But which ever element he works in, the central and basic tasks will be related to health education. This is why health education is the centre of our PHC Circle (figure 5.1). We have reproduced this diagram here for use when referring to the examples of tasks.

In our lists of tasks we have included only those tasks performed by PHC workers—but it must be remembered that in PHC tasks are also performed by the family and the community. Although these family and community tasks are not included in our lists, the fundamental work of health education to encourage the people to undertake health-promoting tasks applies to every list and to every element of PHC.

5.2 THE TASKS OF THE PHC WORKER

It is convenient to group the tasks of the PHC worker into two main areas: these may be called (i) Administrative tasks, (ii) Technical tasks.