PERSONAL AND COMMUNAL HEALTH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Questions and Answers

Question 1

MITYANA INSTITUTE OF HEALTH SCIENCE - NO.28

- Define housing.

- Outline the components of an ideal home.

- Explain harmful effects of improper housing.

- What factors are responsible for poor housing in the community?

ANSWER: Examination Script

Housing refers to the physical structures (houses, apartments, shelters) that provide dwelling places for individuals, families, or groups. More broadly, it encompasses not just the shelter itself, but also the surrounding environment, services, and facilities that contribute to the physical, mental, and social well-being of its occupants. Good housing is essential for health, safety, and overall quality of life.

1. Adequate Shelter and Structural Safety: Strong, stable structure (roof, walls, foundation) that protects from weather (rain, sun, wind, cold) and physical hazards.

2. Sufficient Space and Prevention of Overcrowding: Enough living space for all occupants to carry out daily activities comfortably, ensuring privacy and reducing the risk of infectious disease transmission. Separate rooms for sleeping, cooking, and living if possible.

3. Good Ventilation: Adequate airflow through windows, doors, or vents to remove stale air, smoke, odors, and moisture, and to bring in fresh air. This helps prevent respiratory infections and mold growth.

4. Adequate Lighting (Natural and Artificial): Sufficient natural light during the day (through windows) and safe, adequate artificial lighting for evenings and dark areas to prevent accidents and eye strain.

5. Safe Water Supply: Access to a reliable source of clean and safe drinking water, either within the home or nearby, to prevent waterborne diseases.

6. Sanitary Excreta and Waste Disposal: Proper facilities for human waste disposal (e.g., latrine, toilet) and a system for safe disposal of household garbage to prevent contamination and breeding of pests.

7. Protection from Pests and Vectors: Measures to prevent entry and breeding of disease-carrying insects (mosquitoes, flies) and rodents (e.g., screens on windows, proper food storage, clean surroundings).

8. Safe Food Preparation and Storage Facilities: A clean area for cooking with good ventilation (especially if using biomass fuels to avoid indoor air pollution) and safe storage for food to prevent contamination.

9. Thermal Comfort: Protection from extreme heat or cold. The design and materials should help maintain a comfortable indoor temperature.

10. Security and Safety: Protection from intruders, accidents (e.g., safe electrical wiring, non-slip floors), and environmental hazards (e.g., located away from flood-prone areas or industrial pollution).

11. Cleanliness and Maintainability: Surfaces (floors, walls) that are easy to clean and maintain hygiene.

12. Access to Essential Services: Reasonable access to healthcare, schools, markets, and transportation.

Increased Risk of Infectious Diseases: Overcrowding: Facilitates easy spread of airborne diseases like tuberculosis (TB), influenza, measles, and meningitis. Poor Sanitation & Unsafe Water: Leads to diarrheal diseases (cholera, typhoid, dysentery), parasitic infections, and skin/eye infections like trachoma and scabies. Inadequate Ventilation: Increases concentration of indoor air pollutants and pathogens, contributing to respiratory infections. Pest Infestation: Rodents and insects can transmit diseases (e.g., plague, leptospirosis, dengue fever, malaria).

Respiratory Problems: Dampness and mold growth due to poor ventilation or leaks can trigger asthma, allergies, and other respiratory conditions. Indoor air pollution from cooking with solid fuels (wood, charcoal) in poorly ventilated kitchens causes acute and chronic respiratory diseases.

Accidents and Injuries: Poorly constructed or maintained houses can lead to falls, burns (from unsafe cooking fires or kerosene lamps), electrocution (faulty wiring), and injuries from collapsing structures. Lack of lighting also increases accident risk.

Mental Health Issues: Overcrowding, lack of privacy, noise, insecurity, and the stress of living in substandard conditions can contribute to anxiety, depression, stress, and social dysfunction.

Exposure to Extreme Temperatures: Poorly insulated or designed housing offers little protection from extreme heat or cold, leading to heat stress, heatstroke, hypothermia, or worsening of chronic conditions.

Vector-Borne Diseases: Houses that are not properly screened or are located near stagnant water can increase exposure to mosquitoes carrying malaria, dengue, or Zika virus.

Impact on Child Development: Poor housing can negatively affect children's physical health (e.g., stunting due to recurrent infections), cognitive development (e.g., due to lead poisoning from old paint, or lack of quiet space for study), and educational attainment.

Skin Infections: Overcrowding and poor personal hygiene (often linked to lack of water) can lead to spread of skin diseases like scabies and fungal infections.

Fire Hazards: Use of flammable building materials, unsafe cooking practices, or faulty electrical wiring increases the risk of fires.

Social Problems: Substandard housing and slum conditions can be associated with increased crime rates, domestic violence, and social exclusion.

Poverty and Low Income: This is a primary factor. People with low incomes cannot afford to build, buy, or rent safe and adequate housing, leading them to live in substandard or overcrowded conditions.

Rapid Urbanization and Rural-Urban Migration: Large numbers of people moving to cities in search of opportunities often outpace the availability of affordable housing, leading to the growth of slums and informal settlements.

Lack of Access to Affordable Land: High land prices, insecure land tenure, and complex land acquisition processes can make it difficult for low-income families to obtain land for housing.

Inadequate Government Policies and Planning: Lack of effective housing policies, poor urban planning, insufficient investment in low-cost housing, and weak enforcement of building codes contribute to the problem.

Limited Access to Finance and Credit: Many low-income individuals cannot access mortgages or loans to build or improve their homes due to lack of collateral or stable income.

High Cost of Building Materials: Expensive or unavailable quality building materials can force people to use cheaper, less durable, or unsafe alternatives.

Natural Disasters and Conflicts: Floods, earthquakes, droughts, and civil conflicts can destroy existing housing and displace large populations, leading to emergency and often inadequate shelter situations.

Lack of Infrastructure and Basic Services: Areas lacking access to clean water, sanitation, electricity, and roads often have poor quality housing, as these services are integral to a healthy living environment.

Weak Governance and Corruption: Corruption in land allocation, housing development, or enforcement of regulations can worsen housing problems.

Lack of Awareness and Education: Sometimes, communities may lack knowledge about safe building practices or the health risks associated with poor housing.

Population Growth: High population growth rates can put immense pressure on existing housing stock and resources, especially if construction does not keep pace.

Cultural Factors and Traditions: In some cases, traditional building methods may not be durable or may contribute to certain health risks if not adapted.

Question 2

ELGON SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY - NO.29

- What is personal hygiene?

- How would you ensure effective personal hygiene?

- Explain the effects of poor personal hygiene.

ANSWER: Examination Script

Personal hygiene refers to the practices performed by an individual to care for their bodily health and well-being through cleanliness. It involves maintaining the cleanliness of one's body and clothing to preserve overall health, prevent the spread of infectious diseases, and enhance self-esteem and social acceptance. It includes practices like handwashing, bathing, oral care, and care of hair, nails, and clothes.

1. Regular Handwashing: Wash hands frequently with soap and clean running water, especially: Before preparing or eating food. After using the toilet or latrine. After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose. After touching animals or animal waste. After handling garbage. Before and after caring for someone who is sick. Use proper technique: lather for at least 20 seconds, scrub all surfaces, rinse well, and dry with a clean towel or air dry. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2. Regular Bathing/Showering: Bathe or shower daily, or as often as needed, using soap and clean water to remove dirt, sweat, and body odor, and to reduce skin bacteria. Pay attention to all body parts, including armpits, groin, and feet.

3. Oral Hygiene: Brush teeth at least twice a day (morning and before bed) with fluoride toothpaste to prevent tooth decay, gum disease, and bad breath. Floss daily if possible. Clean the tongue.

4. Hair Care: Wash hair regularly with shampoo to keep it clean and free from dirt, oil, and parasites like lice. Keep hair neat.

5. Nail Care: Keep fingernails and toenails trimmed and clean to prevent the accumulation of dirt and germs underneath them. Avoid biting nails.

6. Clean Clothing: Wear clean clothes, including undergarments, daily. Wash soiled clothes regularly with soap and water and dry them properly (preferably in sunlight).

7. Menstrual Hygiene (for females): During menstruation, use clean sanitary pads, tampons, or menstrual cups and change them regularly (every 4-6 hours or as needed). Dispose of used materials properly. Maintain genital hygiene.

8. Foot Hygiene: Wash feet daily and dry them thoroughly, especially between the toes, to prevent fungal infections. Wear clean socks and appropriate footwear.

9. Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette: Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing to prevent the spread of germs. Dispose of used tissues properly and wash hands afterwards.

10. Food Hygiene (Personal aspect): Wash hands before handling food. Avoid coughing or sneezing over food. Keep kitchen surfaces and utensils clean.

11. Environmental Cleanliness (Personal space): Keep one's immediate living and working space clean and tidy to reduce dust and germs.

12. Education and Awareness: Understand the importance of each hygiene practice and teach these habits to children from a young age.

Increased Risk of Infections: This is the most significant effect. Gastrointestinal Infections: E.g., diarrhea, dysentery, cholera, typhoid, food poisoning, parasitic worms, often from contaminated hands, food, or water. Respiratory Infections: E.g., common cold, influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis, spread through unwashed hands or poor cough etiquette. Skin Infections: E.g., fungal infections (ringworm, athlete's foot), bacterial infections (boils, impetigo), scabies, lice infestations. Eye Infections: E.g., conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), trachoma, spread by contaminated hands or face cloths. Oral Health Problems: Tooth decay (dental caries), gum disease (gingivitis, periodontitis), bad breath (halitosis). Genitourinary Infections: E.g., urinary tract infections (UTIs), yeast infections, especially with poor menstrual or genital hygiene.

Body Odor: Accumulation of sweat and bacteria on the skin leads to unpleasant body odor, which can cause social discomfort.

Social and Psychological Effects: Social Stigma and Isolation: Poor hygiene can lead to social rejection, bullying, and difficulty forming relationships. Low Self-Esteem and Confidence: Feeling unclean or having body odor can negatively impact how a person feels about themselves. Reduced Opportunities: May affect prospects in employment or education.

Spread of Diseases to Others: An individual with poor hygiene can easily transmit pathogens to family members, colleagues, and the wider community.

Worsening of Existing Health Conditions: For individuals with chronic illnesses or weakened immune systems, poor hygiene can lead to more frequent or severe infections and complications.

Food Contamination and Foodborne Illnesses: If food handlers practice poor personal hygiene, they can contaminate food and cause outbreaks of illness.

Increased Healthcare Costs: Frequent illnesses due to poor hygiene lead to more doctor visits, medication costs, and lost productivity.

Parasitic Infestations: Such as head lice, body lice, or pubic lice, and intestinal worms.

Question 3

ALICE ANUME SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY PALLISA - NO.30

- List five types of latrine.

- Share five points that should be put in to consideration when selecting a particular type of latrine.

- Explain the main stages in construction of a VIP latrine.

- Explain how VIP latrine works.

ANSWER: Examination Script

1. Simple Pit Latrine (Traditional Pit Latrine): A basic type consisting of a hole dug in the ground (the pit) covered by a slab with a drop hole. A superstructure provides privacy. Excreta falls directly into the pit.

2. Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) Latrine: An improvement on the simple pit latrine. It has a vent pipe extending from the pit up above the latrine roof, covered with a fly screen at the top. This helps control odors and flies.

3. Pour-Flush Latrine: Has a water seal (a U-shaped pipe or pan filled with water) below the squatting pan or seat. Users pour a small amount of water (1-3 liters) to flush excreta into the pit. The water seal prevents odors and flies from coming out of the pit.

4. Composting Latrine (EcoSan Toilet): Designed to decompose human excreta with little or no water, producing a compost-like material that can be used as a soil conditioner. Often involves separating urine from feces (urine-diverting dry toilet - UDDT).

5. Arborloo (Shallow Pit Composting Latrine): A simple, shallow pit latrine (about 1-1.5 meters deep) with a movable slab and superstructure. When the pit is nearly full, soil and leaves are added, the slab and superstructure are moved to a new pit, and a tree is planted in the old, filled pit, using the composted waste as fertilizer.

6. Twin-Pit Latrine (e.g., Twin-Pit Pour-Flush): Consists of two pits used alternately. While one pit is in use, the other is sealed and the contents decompose safely. When the first pit is full, it is sealed, and the second pit is used. By the time the second pit is full, the contents of the first pit have turned into safe, odor-free compost.

7. Borehole Latrine: A deep, narrow hole (typically 30-40 cm diameter, several meters deep) drilled into the ground, covered by a small slab and superstructure. Suitable in areas with stable soil and deep water table.

1. Cost and Affordability: Consider the initial construction cost (materials, labor) and any ongoing maintenance costs. The latrine type should be affordable for the users or community.

2. Water Availability: Some latrines (like pour-flush or cistern flush toilets) require water for flushing. If water is scarce, dry latrine options (like simple pit, VIP, composting) are more suitable.

3. Ground Conditions and Water Table Level: The type of soil (e.g., sandy, rocky, clay), stability of the ground, and the depth of the water table are crucial. Pit latrines are not suitable if the water table is high (risk of groundwater contamination) or if the ground is very rocky or unstable.

4. User Preferences, Cultural Acceptability, and Ease of Use: The latrine should be acceptable to the users in terms of design, privacy, comfort, and cultural norms (e.g., squatting vs. sitting, anal cleansing methods). It should also be easy for all users, including children, elderly, and disabled individuals, to use safely.

5. Availability of Materials and Local Skills: Are the materials needed for construction (e.g., cement, bricks, pipes, wood) locally available and affordable? Are there local artisans or builders with the skills to construct and maintain the chosen latrine type?

6. Sludge/Waste Management (Pit Emptying and Disposal): Consider how the pit will be emptied when full (for pit latrines) or how compost will be managed (for composting latrines). Safe emptying and disposal/reuse methods are essential. Twin-pit systems simplify this.

7. Odor and Fly Control: Choose a design that minimizes odors and prevents fly breeding (e.g., VIP latrines, pour-flush latrines with water seals). This improves user experience and hygiene.

8. Durability and Maintenance Requirements: The latrine should be built with durable materials and designed for easy cleaning and maintenance to ensure it remains functional and hygienic over time.

1. Site Selection and Pit Digging: Site Selection: Choose a suitable location at least 15-30 meters away from water sources (wells, boreholes) and downhill from them if possible, to prevent contamination. Ensure it's accessible but offers privacy. Avoid areas prone to flooding. Pit Digging: Dig a pit of appropriate size (e.g., 1m x 1m wide, 2-3m deep, or more, depending on soil and user numbers). The shape can be circular or rectangular.

2. Pit Lining (if necessary): In unstable or loose soil, the pit walls need to be lined (e.g., with bricks, concrete rings, stones, or timber) to prevent collapse. The lining should be permeable below the liquid level to allow seepage, but the top 0.5m should be impermeable to prevent surface water entry.

3. Construction of the Slab (Floor): A strong, durable, and cleanable slab is made, usually from reinforced concrete. It should cover the entire pit. The slab must have at least two holes: one drop hole for defecation (squat hole or opening for a seat), and another hole for the vent pipe, usually at a corner. The drop hole should have a cover to further reduce flies and odor when not in use.

4. Installation of the Vent Pipe: A straight pipe (e.g., PVC, asbestos cement, or brick), typically 100-150mm (4-6 inches) in diameter, is installed vertically from the pit up through the slab and extends at least 0.5 meters above the highest point of the latrine roof. The outside of the vent pipe should be painted black to absorb heat from the sun, which helps create an upward air current (convection). A durable fly screen (e.g., stainless steel or UV-resistant plastic mesh) is securely fixed to the top of the vent pipe to trap flies emerging from the pit and prevent new ones from entering.

5. Construction of the Superstructure (Shelter): Walls and a roof are built around the slab to provide privacy, protection from weather, and to support the vent pipe if needed. Materials can vary (bricks, mud, wood, iron sheets). The inside of the superstructure should be relatively dark to make the top of the well-lit vent pipe more attractive to flies in the pit. A door is fitted, preferably opening outwards.

6. Finishing Touches: Ensure the area around the latrine is sloped to drain rainwater away from the pit. Provide handwashing facilities nearby with soap and water.

Odor Control: Air Circulation: The vent pipe creates an upward flow of air (like a chimney). Wind blowing across the top of the vent pipe helps draw air out of the pit. Also, if the pipe is painted black, solar heating warms the air inside, causing it to rise. Odor Removal: This upward airflow carries foul-smelling gases from the pit up the vent pipe and disperses them high above the latrine, away from the users. Fresh air is drawn into the pit through the drop hole, further aiding ventilation.

Fly Control: Fly Attraction: Flies are naturally attracted to light. Any flies that breed in the pit or enter through the drop hole will be attracted to the light coming from the top of the vent pipe (as the inside of the latrine superstructure is kept relatively dark). Fly Trapping: As the flies fly up the vent pipe towards the light, they are trapped by the fly screen at the top. They eventually die there and fall back into the pit or are blown away, thus breaking their breeding cycle and preventing them from spreading diseases by moving between the pit and human food/environment. Drop Hole Cover: Keeping the drop hole covered when not in use further helps by making the vent pipe the primary light source for flies in the pit and reducing odor escape into the shelter.

Decomposition: Like a simple pit latrine, excreta in the pit undergoes natural anaerobic decomposition, slowly reducing its volume over time.