

University of Basrah

College of Medicine

Department of Community Medicine

1. History

The Department of Community Medicine was established in the academic year 1971-1972 as the Department of Public Health, Preventive and Social Medicine. In 1980 it was re-named to become the Department of Community Medicine.

In 1986, a master degree studies were initiate, in 1991, a diploma degree was established and these then were followed up by PHD degree studies in 1998.

The department main activities are: teaching medical students both under and postgraduates the principles and methods of epidemiology, medical statistics, basic epidemiology and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases. This is in addition to teaching of primary health care concepts and practical programs in Iraq. Health care administration (planning management and evaluation techniques) as well as medical sociology and demography are also taught by the department. Brief sessions are also given on topics related to health economics, health information and utilization of health care services. A short course is also arranged to tackle problems of environmental and occupational health.

In addition to teaching, members of the department are pioneers in research and advisory work to other departments in the college of medicine and to the health authorities in Basrah. The research activities cover a variety of health problems such as measurement of population health, identification of risk factors, evaluation of health services performance, and medical ethics conduct. The interest in health system research is growing and the department is active in research and development in coordination with health authorities in Basrah during the last ten years. The department conducted a series of household survey in different parts of Basrah city and its suburbs. These surveys were designed to provide practical opportunities to both staff and medical students to apply community medicine and epidemiology concepts and techniques at population level. They also provide relevant data on socio-demographic, health and environmental conditions of the population, which all can be used to improve health and services delivery in targeted study areas.