

A Description of the Work of a General Practitioner

A revised Statement by the Leeuwenhorst Working Group, November 1981

The general practitioner is a licensed medical graduate who gives personal, primary and continuing care in their environment to individuals, families and the practice population, irrespective of age, sex, illness or problem. It is the wide range and synthesis of these aspects of care which is unique.

He/she will include and integrate physical, psychological and social factors in considering health and illness, and in the care given.

Continuing care provides knowledge and develops a relationship of trust which can be used professionally.

He/she:

- is available to attend patients wherever needed, including their home.
- makes an initial decision about his/her handling of every problem presented.
- knows how and when to intervene through treatment, prevention and education to promote health and self care in patients, their families and communities.
- practices in co-operation with other colleagues, medical and non-medical, sometimes by referrals.
- is prepared for these tasks by specific vocational training, following basic education and maintained through continuing education.