INTRODUCTION

E.J.M. Sjamsjoedin-Visser

In recent years an increasing interest has developed with respect to Home Treatment both for patients and their parents and also by people who are involved with treating hemophilia.

Also in the Netherlands, a small country with a high standard of medical care, it proved to be possible and successful to organize a home treatment program. About 35% of the potential candidates are on Home Treatment. It became evident that a theoretical instruction is even more important than a technical training such as instructing the patients how to treat, when to treat, when to consult their doctor etc.

In 1980 a study was undertaken in our national hemophilia center, the Van Creveld Clinic in Bilthoven. We asked the patients who were potential candidates why they were not on home treatment. We found then that there were several patients, but also quite a number of physicians who still were not familiar with the possibility of home treatment and were reluctant to accept the responsibility. Also some patients found it quite easy to go to the hospital near their homes for treatment. On the other hand, we found that all the patients on home treatment wanted to stay on home treatment. There were no failures and everybody was happy with the free and independent way of life.

In consequence of the development of this type of therapy, a good control system appears to be necessary. Firstly for the patient to support the management of his treatment and secondly, to give the medical staff the possibility to collect data about the different aspects of relevance in this type of treatment, for example, the degree of arthropathy, hospitalization, absence from school and work, costs, social development and others.

With this information it is possible to teach other people and plan for the future.

A team of people, the so-called 'comprehensive care team', can be very helpful to organize such a program. These first two papers deal with both aspects, that is to say, the need for a control system and the functioning of a team.