

**Access to Essential Medicines and Rational Drug Use: Results of a study  
on availability of medicines to patients in public health facilities in  
Chhattisgarh State, India**

Narayan Tripathi  
State Health Resource Centre, Chhattisgarh, India

**INTRODUCTION:**

- Despite India is known as “Pharmacy of global south”, 65% of its population does not have access to essential medicines.
- A dedicated autonomous institution to strengthen procurement and supply as well as rational use of medicines has been suggested as a solution.
- In 2011 the Chhattisgarh Medical Services Corporation was set up to ensure availability of essential medicines. Free generic medicines based on the State Essential Drug List have been guaranteed by the state to all patients in public health facilities.
- This study was done to evaluate the implementation of this scheme.

**METHODOLOGY:**

- An analysis of prescriptions and an exit survey of patients who attended public hospitals for outpatient or inpatient services were the primary methods used for this study.
- Two rounds of large surveys, first in 2015 and second in 2018 were done. In second survey out of pocket expenditure along with rationality of care was also assessed.

**RESULT:**

**Table.1. Generic drug prescription and Availability in public facility**

Indicator	2015	2018
State average of generic medicines prescribed by the physicians	68.89%	74.60%
Prescribed generic medicines made available to patients	58.28%	62.30%

**Out of pocket expenditure**

- Average Out of pocket spending per patient on medicines for patients going to Primary Health Centers (PHC) was INR.128, for those going to Block hospitals, it was INR.143 and for those going to District Hospital was INR.85.

**Table.2.Number of drugs prescribed per prescription**

Health Facility	OPD/IPD	Antibiotic	NSAIDS	Vitamins	Anti-hypertensive	Anti-diabetic
Primary Health Centre	3.6/5.7	1.20	0.45	0.74	0.0	0.0
Community Health Centre	3.8/6.5	1.22	0.34	1.14	0.05	0.01
District Hospital	3/6.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0

**CONCLUSION:**

- Study recommends capacity building of doctors, effective institutional arrangements for strengthening timely and adequate supply of drugs to optimize the situation.
- It has been observed that people in areas having high literacy rate purchase medicines from outside the facility more frequently.