

24-9-2025

## Evaluating the role of Homoeopathy in rural and low-resource settings

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### How to cite this article

Aphale P, Dokania S, Shekhar H. Evaluating the role of Homoeopathy in rural and low-resource settings. *Indian J Res Homoeopathy*. 2025;19(3):222–3.

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## Evaluating the role of Homoeopathy in rural and low-resource settings

### Abstract

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### Acknowledgments and Source of Funding

Statement of financial support: Author declare that this study received no funding from any source.



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Evaluating the role of Homoeopathy in rural and low-resource settings

Parth Aphale<sup>1</sup>\*, Shashank Dokania<sup>2</sup>, Himanshu Shekhar<sup>3</sup>

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Dear Editor,

We are writing to illuminate the often-overlooked, yet vital role of Homoeopathy in public health, especially within the rural and underserved communities of India. With nearly 70% of our population residing in these areas, the challenges of accessing conventional medical care are daunting. The individuals face not only a lack of transportation and financial constraints but also a pervasive scarcity of healthcare facilities. In such a landscape, Homoeopathy emerges as not just an alternative but a beacon of hope for millions.

Homoeopathy, steeped in traditional and cultural significance, has become an integral part of India's health paradigm. Manchanda *et al*<sup>1</sup> highlight its cost-effectiveness, revealing that homoeopathic treatments empower patients by actively engaging them in their own health journeys. This empowerment translates into enhanced adherence to treatment protocols and greater overall satisfaction. For families grappling with economic hardships, the affordability of Homoeopathy can mean the difference between access to healthcare and the daunting prospect of unmet medical needs.

The recent World Health Organization (WHO) updates underscore the importance of integrating traditional and complementary medicine, including Homoeopathy, into health systems to advance universal health coverage and achieve Sustainable Development Goals. The WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034 outlines frameworks for evidence generation, workforce development, and equitable access, positioning Homoeopathy as a

potential contributor to primary healthcare in diverse settings.<sup>2</sup>

In a world that is increasingly recognising the value of traditional and complementary medicine, WHO emphasises the necessity of incorporating these practices into national health systems to achieve universal health coverage.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, patient satisfaction with Homoeopathy is not merely anecdotal; it is backed by empirical evidence. A compelling study by Marian *et al*<sup>4</sup> indicates that patients are drawn to Homeopathy's holistic approach, which prioritises individual care and treats the person as a whole. This focus on the whole person fosters trust and communication, essential components of effective healthcare, particularly in rural settings where traditional beliefs play a pivotal role in health-seeking behavior. It is this very relationship—where patients feel heard and valued—that underpins successful healthcare delivery.<sup>5</sup>

Homoeopathy has demonstrated a remarkable efficacy in addressing numerous health issues like plague in rural India, from respiratory infections to gastrointestinal disorders. Notably, Nayak *et al*<sup>6</sup> showcased Homoeopathy's effectiveness during outbreaks of vector-borne diseases such as dengue and chikungunya.

Homoeopathy has been utilised in the prevention and management of emerging public health challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic, several AYUSH-directed initiatives employed Homoeopathy as a prophylactic and adjunctive care option, with

**How to cite this article:** Aphale P, Dokania S, Shekhar H. Evaluating the role of Homoeopathy in rural and low-resource settings. *Indian J Res Homoeopathy*. 2025;19(3):222–3.

Received 16 January 2025; Accepted 22 August 2025.

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<https://doi.org/10.53945/2320-7094.2372>

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observational studies reporting improvements in symptom relief and recovery rates.<sup>7</sup> In the sphere of non-communicable diseases, homoeopathic interventions have been explored for supportive management of diabetes, hypertension, and arthritis, often focusing on enhancing quality of life and reducing symptom burden.<sup>8–10</sup> Furthermore, in child health, Homoeopathy has been used in community-based programs targeting acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases, with reports of reduced episode frequency and improved recovery times, thus supporting its relevance in paediatric public health.<sup>11</sup>

The rapid and effective relief provided by Homoeopathy in such crises not only alleviates suffering but also underscores its potential integration into the broader healthcare framework. In regions where conventional medical services may be overstretched or entirely absent, Homoeopathy can serve as a critical lifeline.

India stands at the precipice of this integration, with a robust homoeopathic infrastructure waiting to be harnessed. By training local healthcare providers in Homoeopathy, we can extend effective treatment options to remote areas, ensuring that quality care is within reach for all.

As India strives to rectify healthcare disparities and elevate health outcomes, it is imperative to advocate for the inclusion of Homoeopathy in public health initiatives. This could include structured training programs for rural health workers, development of standard treatment protocols for priority conditions, establishment of referral linkages between Homoeopathy units and higher-level facilities, and inclusion of homoeopathic medicines in essential drug lists for primary care. Strategic collaborations between government agencies, academic institutions, and community organisations can ensure evidence-based deployment, monitoring, and scale-up. Such measures would not only enhance healthcare access but also promote sustainable, culturally aligned, and cost-effective health solutions for underserved populations.

By doing so, we would not only enhance healthcare access, but also enrich the fabric of community health, nurturing a healthier, more resilient population.

## Funding statement

The authors declare that this letter did not receive any funding from any source.

## Statement of conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Author contribution

**Parth Aphale:** Concept, Design Manuscript review.

**Shashank Dokania:** Literature search, Manuscript writing, manuscript editing.

**Himanshu Shekhar:** Design, Manuscript writing, manuscript editing.

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