

UPSC Civil Services Examination

Political Science & International Relations

Topic: National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) – Indian Polity Notes

The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched by the Prime Minister on 12th April 2005, to provide accessible, affordable and quality health care to the rural population, especially the vulnerable groups.



Under the NRHM, the Empowered Action Group (EAG) States, as well as the North Eastern States, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, have been given special focus to ensure the greatest attention where needed.

Objectives and Components of NRHM

The thrust of the Mission is on establishing a fully functional, community-owned, decentralized health delivery system with inter-sectoral convergence at all levels, to ensure simultaneous action on a wide range of determinants of health. Basic objectives to implement NRHM are:

- Reduction in infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate
- Ensuring population stabilization
- Prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases
- Upgrading **AYUSH** (Ayurvedic Yoga Unani Siddh and Homoeopath) for promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

And the major initiatives under NRHM are as follows.

1. ASHA:

- More than 8.84 lakh community Health volunteers called Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) have been engaged under the mission for establishing a link between the community and the health system.
- ASHA is the first port of call for any health-related demands of deprived sections of the population, especially women and children, who find it difficult to access health services in rural areas.
- This programme is expanding across States and has particularly been successful in bringing people back to the Public Health System. It has also increased the utilization of outpatient services, diagnostic facilities, institutional deliveries and inpatient care.

2. Rogi Kalyan Samiti (Patient Welfare Committee)/Hospital Management Society:

- It is a registered society that acts as a group of trustees to manage the affairs of the hospitals.
- Financial assistance is provided to these Committees through the united fund to undertake activities for patient welfare.

3. The United Grants to Sub-Centres

- It has given new confidence to auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) in the field who are better equipped now with Blood Pressure measuring equipment, Stethoscope, weighing machine, etc.
- They can actually undertake proper antenatal care and other health care services.
- Another important tool of community empowerment is the Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committee (VHSNC) which works at the grassroots levels.

4. Health Care Service Delivery

- Health Care Service Delivery requires intensive human resource inputs. As can be seen from various surveys, there is an enormous shortage of human resources in the public health care sector in the country.
- NRHM has attempted to fill the gaps in human resources by providing nearly 1.7 lakh people for health services to States including 8,871 Doctors, 2025 Specialists, 76,643 ANMs, 41,609 Staff Nurses, etc. on contractual basis.
- Many unserved areas have been covered through Mobile Medical Units (MMU). So far 2024 MMU are operational in 459 districts across the country.
- The government also provides free ambulance services in every nook and corner of the country connected with a toll-free number and available within 30 minutes of the call. Over 12,000 basic and emergency patient transport vehicles have been provided under NRHM.

5. Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram

- In order to promote universal healthcare, the government started the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) initiative which provides free to & fro transport, free drugs, free diagnostics, free blood, free diet to pregnant women who come for delivery in public health institutions and sick new-borns.

UPSC Questions related to NRHM

How many states have initiated Janani Suraksha Yojana?

- The scheme focuses on the poor pregnant women with a special dispensation for states that have low institutional delivery rates, namely,
 - Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Rajasthan, Orissa, and Jammu and Kashmir.
- While these states have been named Low Performing States (LPS), the remaining states have been named High Performing States (HPS).

The NRHM works under which ministry of the government?

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare oversees the functionality of the National Health Mission which includes the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM).

