

## Patients under flagship schemes being forced to buy own drugs

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**New Delhi:** Forcing patients to buy their own drugs when it is supposed to be given to them free of charge is widespread even under the flagship National Rural Health Mission.

The fourth Common Review Mission (CRM) report 2010 of NRHM released on Saturday says that the practice of prescribing drugs which the patient needs to purchase is widespread. The report says that out-of-pocket expenditure for purchase of drugs in Assam, Chandigarh (antibiotics), Maharashtra (Goregaon hospital patients were asked to purchase injections and drugs for Fal-

ciparum as well as Vivax malaria), Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh are high. In Assam, patients were asked to purchase drugs from the pharmacy despite free supply of the same drugs. In Chandigarh, patients with BPL cards are entitled to free medicines. However, there are no norms to identify poor patients and provide free drugs.

In Chhattisgarh, patients were asked to purchase disposables and catgut for Lower Segment Caesarean Sections (LSCS). Irrational use of drugs was pointed out in some states like Chhattisgarh where oral antibiotic and injectables for normal deliveries are prescribed, the report says.

*Confirmed*