

Equity and Provision of Health Services in Remote Areas: A Systematic Review

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Introduction

One concrete challenge in improving accessibility to healthcare services is the geographical constraints and difficult-to-reach infrastructure, especially in remote areas. Remote areas often have limited access to healthcare facilities due to long distances, a lack of adequate transportation, and infrastructure limitations. This study aimed to review the national strategy in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) with a specific focus on health equity, in order to explore the utilization of primary care facilities as a means to improve health equity for remote and indigenous populations in remote areas.

Method

We performed a comprehensive evaluation of the approach aimed at enhancing equity in underserved areas of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) by utilizing primary healthcare centers. We utilized Google Scholar to identify reference collections containing pertinent articles published in the past decade.

Results

The indigenous population faces injustice in accessing healthcare services due to inequity and cultural challenges, which results in higher mortality rates, disability rates, and lower life expectancy compared to the non-indigenous population or those in non-remote areas.

Strategy	Main Explanation	Challenges
Community participation in decision-making regarding the healthcare services they receive	Trained healthcare professionals provide direct visits to difficult areas for indigenous populations, offering various services, including health examinations, counseling, immunizations, and minor treatments.	Geographical constraints and infrastructure that is difficult to reach, especially in remote areas
The culturally sensitive approach or sensitivity towards local culture in the provision of healthcare services	Engage community figures and provide cultural training for healthcare workers to improve access to and tailor health services for the native or indigenous population.	The differences in values, beliefs, and health practices between the local community and healthcare workers, including those from outside the region, should be considered.
Improving the accessibility of healthcare services through outreach to remote or hard-to-reach areas	Involving the community in health program planning and evaluation aligns health policies with the needs and expectations of the indigenous population. Additionally, educational campaigns and accessible information are necessary to raise awareness about the importance of health and healthcare services.	The community lacks awareness and understanding of the importance of health and services, and feels powerless in decision-making.

Discussion and Conclusion

The government needs to collaborate with the community and healthcare workers, as well as receive support from various parties, to overcome these challenges. Concrete steps, such as identifying remote areas, providing training for healthcare workers and the community, as well as conducting educational campaigns and providing easily understandable information, can be taken to improve accessibility to healthcare services and community participation in decision-making regarding healthcare services.

References

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