

DNA India

Up to 93% shortage of doctors in Gujarat villages

Up to 93 per cent posts of doctors and other specialists are unfilled in health centres rural areas, raising several question marks on the quality of healthcare facilities available to villagers.

An analysis of availability of doctors in primary health centres and community health centres shows that vacancies of specialists exceed the number available.

As of March 31, 2017, sanctioned strength of surgeons in community health centres is 425, of which 398 positions — a staggering 93.5 per cent of the total — were vacant. Similarly, 53 positions of physicians out of sanctioned 62 were vacant in these centres.

In terms of pediatricians, 43 out of 62 sanctioned posts in community health centres were vacant. Similarly, 25 out of 62 sanctioned posts of obstetricians and gynaecologists in community health centres in rural areas were vacant.

In primary health centres in rural areas, 540 out of 1,769 sanctioned positions were vacant in primary health centres in rural areas.

“Not just doctors and specialists, there are vacancies across the board in health centres in rural areas. A large number of positions for health workers and health assistants — both male and female — radiographers, pharmacists, lab technicians and nursing staff were lying vacant,” Pathey, a non-profit which did the analysis, said.

Gujarat 28th in doctor availability

Gujarat ranks 28th among states and union territories in terms of availability of allopathic doctors. Pathey said that there is one government allopathic doctor for every 11,475 persons in the state, as against national average of one doctor for every 11,097 people. Gujarat ranks behind the North Eastern states, besides Uttarakhand, Punjab, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Andhra, Haryana, West Bengal and Odisha, among others.