Society & Social Justice · GS - II

“Affordable access to essential medicines is a crucial component of universal health coverage.” Discuss the role of pharmaceutical price regulation in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 18/10/2026	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Affordable healthcare, NPPA, DPCO 2013, ceiling prices, essential medicines, out-of-pocket expenditure, universal health coverage, pharmaceutical industry, drug availability, quality healthcare, public health equity.

Model Answer

Introduction

Affordable medicines are essential for ensuring equitable healthcare access. High drug prices can increase out-of-pocket expenditure and force vulnerable households to delay or discontinue treatment.

Main Body

Role of Pharmaceutical Price Regulation

1. Affordability: Price controls can reduce the cost of essential medicines, including treatments for serious diseases.
2. Financial protection: Lower medicine expenditure can reduce the risk of households falling into poverty due to healthcare costs.
3. Equity: Affordable drugs improve access for economically weaker sections.
4. Regulatory oversight: The NPPA implements applicable drug pricing rules and monitors medicine prices.

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Challenges

Excessive pricing pressures may affect incentives for pharmaceutical innovation, while inadequate supply, quality concerns and distribution gaps can limit access even when prices fall.

Therefore, price regulation should be supported by transparent monitoring, quality assurance, reliable procurement and stronger public healthcare facilities.

Conclusion

Pharmaceutical price regulation is an important instrument for advancing universal health coverage. A balanced approach that combines affordability, medicine availability, quality and innovation can make India's healthcare system more inclusive and sustainable.

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