

# How health systems factors affect access to psychotropic medicines

January 31 2012

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In a cross-sectional analysis of WHO-AIMS data published in this week's *PLoS Medicine*, Ryan McBain of Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, USA and colleagues investigated the associations between health system components and access to psychotropic drugs in 63 low- and middle- income countries (LAMICs).

The authors' findings indicate that access to psychotropic medicines in LAMICs is related to key components within the mental health systems of these countries but that availability and [affordability](#) are affected to different extents by these components.

The authors state: "Results suggest that strengthening specific mental health systems features might be an important way to facilitate access to psychotropic medicines, and results also underscore the differentially greater role of country development in promoting affordability."

**More information:** McBain R, Norton DJ, Morris J, Yasamy MT, Betancourt TS (2012) The Role of Health Systems Factors in Facilitating Access to Psychotropic Medicines: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the WHO-AIMS in 63 Low- and Middle-Income Countries. *PLoS Med* 9(1): e1001166. [doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001166](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001166)

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