

Overcoming barriers to point-of-care testing in low-resource settings

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In a Policy Forum article in this week's *PLOS Medicine* Madhukar Pai from McGill University, Canada and colleagues discuss a framework for how point-of-care testing can be applied to infectious diseases in low- and middle-income countries.

The authors note that a range of barriers exist to prevent successful use of point-of-care testing and that the availability alone of rapid or simple tests does not automatically ensure their [adoption](#) or scale-up.

The authors describe a framework that envisions point-of-care testing as a spectrum of technologies (simplest to more sophisticated), users (lay persons to highly trained) and settings (homes, communities, clinics, peripheral laboratories, and hospitals).

The article also emphasizes that technology as such does not define a point-of-care tests and that in order to successfully scale-up point-of-care testing the focus should be on point-of-care programs rather than the technology itself.

More information: Pai NP, Vadnais C, Denkinger C, Engel N, Pai M (2012) Point-of-Care Testing for Infectious Diseases: Diversity, Complexity, and Barriers in Low- And Middle-Income Countries. *PLoS Med* 9(9): e1001306. [doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001306](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001306)

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