

**The Health Programme For Homeless Children In Residential Care:  
A Handbook For Programme Managers**

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**A CES-PHRN Collaboration**



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## Preface

The Government of India has decided to launch 700 homes across India for homeless children. This is a milestone policy development as there are very few policies addressing the needs of the homeless in India in general. In light of this new development, the government approached the Centre for Equity Studies (CES) that has been working with the homeless through their *Dil Se Campaign* in Delhi and Hyderabad and have established *Aman Ghars* in both the cities for homeless children. They have been requested to put together protocols/standards and best practices for homeless children in non-custodial residential care. These documented protocols/standards would be important for the functioning of the 700 homes that the government plans to establish. There are seven components that CES is working on – Education Curriculum Development and Transaction, Home Management Systems Design, Financial Management Systems Design, Law and Children in Difficult Circumstances, Physical Health Related Systems and Protocols, Mental Health Related Systems and Protocols and Advocacy.

CES commissioned the physical health related protocols to the Public Health Resource Network (PHRN). PHRN has the expertise in building capacities of public health systems and has developed several modules that are used for training health personnel. This module/handbook will contribute to the larger compilation of all the seven components by CES.

This handbook specifically details the physical health systems that must be in place to address the needs of a homeless child in residential care. We are aware and conscious of the fact that the mental and physical aspect cannot be separated especially in the context of the homeless child where the physical, mental and emotional needs have to be seen in a continuum and addressed simultaneously. The mental health module by CES can be used for cross-reference along with this module.

This handbook is divided in to three sections. The first section sets the context of homelessness and then delves into the health needs of homeless people and specifically homeless children. It then spells out the approach required to address the health needs of homeless children. This section also looks at some existing models in India and some regulatory frameworks addressing health needs of looked-after children in other countries.

The second section is the main body of the handbook. It details all that goes into organising a health intervention programme for homeless children in residential care or as we call it, 'the home'. It has nine sub-sections that constitute the important systems that need to be in place.

The last section of annexures is equally important. It gives examples of health formats that must be there at the home. It gives a drug formulary that was developed by Jan Swasthya Sahyog for further reference; a drug price list that was developed by Locost and growth monitoring charts recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

*Authors*



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