

Non-communicable Diseases in Nepal Research Roundup

Making non-communicable diseases a national priority

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Non-communicable Diseases in Nepal-Research Roundup

December 2024



Publications

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Mental Health Literacy and Attitudes Towards Mental Health Problems Among College Students, Nepal</i>	2
<i>Stress Management Practices Among Employees in Nepal: A Review of Literature</i>	2
<i>Barriers to Accessing Care (BACE) Score in Patients Attending Mental Health Services</i>	3
<i>Perceived biopsychosocial determinants of psychotic illness among caregivers impacts on the family of Kathmandu district in Nepal</i>	3
<i>Quality of Sleep and its Impact on the Academic Performance of Undergraduate Medical Students</i>	3
<i>Exploring the medicine cost of managing Diabetes Mellitus in Nepal: A cross-sectional analysis of oral hypoglycaemic medications</i>	4
<i>Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) in Nepal: Current Challenges and Opportunities in their role in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Screening and Diagnosis</i>	4
<i>Piloting Implementation Design and Preliminary Readiness for Universal Suicide Risk Screening Program in Emergency Department of a Tertiary Care Centre, Nepal: A Mixed-Method Study</i>	5
<i>Coping strategies employed by older Nepalese migrant women to manage their mental distress in the UK: A qualitative research</i>	5
<i>Lung cancer risk and its potential association with PM2.5 in Bagmati province, Nepal—A spatiotemporal study from 2012 to 2021</i>	5
<i>Social determinants of the mental health of pregnant women in Nepal: Stakeholder perspectives</i>	6
<i>The impact of household wealth status on anxiety and depression of Nepal reproductive age women: Propensity score matching analysis</i>	6

NCD Watch Nepal

Roundup Summary

In December 2024, our search on non-communicable diseases and mental health-related literature in Nepal yielded twelve published articles. Most of the studies covered mental health, followed by cancer, diabetes, and sleep health.

Mental Health Literacy and Attitudes Towards Mental Health Problems Among College Students, Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14121189>

Context: Understanding the scenario on mental health literacy and attitudes toward mental health problems are crucial among non-medical college students to address gaps in awareness and attitudes.

Methodology: This cross-sectional survey involved 385 college students from Chitwan and Kathmandu, Nepal, selected through opportunity sampling using tools such as Mental Health Literacy Questionnaire (MHLq-young adult) and Attitudes towards Mental Health Problems (ATMHP).

Key message: Improving mental health literacy (MHL) alone does not necessarily enhance attitudes toward mental health problems (ATMHP). A comprehensive approach that combines education with experiential learning is essential to promote better understanding and support for mental health issues.

Stress Management Practices Among Employees in Nepal: A Review of Literature

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/nprcjm.v1i7.72441>

Context: Rapid economic growth and organizational changes in Nepal have led to rising occupational stress, impacting employees' health, productivity, and retention.

Methodology: This systematic review analyzed peer-reviewed articles from 2015 to 2024, focusing on occupational stress in Nepal. Data from multiple academic databases were thematically categorized to identify organizational stressors, coping strategies, and cultural factors in stress management.

Key message: Workplace stress in Nepal arises from factors like workload, organizational culture, and societal expectations, with existing management strategies often limited by inadequate support systems. Organizations need to prioritize employee well-being by fostering supportive work environments.

Barriers to Accessing Care (BACE) Score in Patients Attending Mental Health Services

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/nprcjmr.v1i7.72483>

Context: Mental health is a critical aspect of overall well-being, yet many individuals face significant challenges in accessing necessary care due to limited availability, inadequate utilization, and insufficient coverage.

Methodology: This was a cross-sectional study performed in Mental Hospital, Lalitpur, Nepal. People suffering from mental illness who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were recruited and the BACE scale was administered.

Key message: Many individuals with mental health issues face barriers to seeking help, such as stigma, lack of support, and a preference for solving problems independently. These challenges are more common among younger people and those with lower socioeconomic status, significantly affecting their quality of life and overall well-being.

Perceived biopsychosocial determinants of psychotic illness among caregivers impacts on the family of Kathmandu district in Nepal

DOI: [10.59429/esp.v9i11.2952](https://doi.org/10.59429/esp.v9i11.2952)

Context: Psychotic illness not only affects individuals but also has significant social, emotional, financial, and health impacts on their families. The role of caregivers and the broader effects on families have often been overlooked.

Methodology: The study employed a Population Proportion Formula to calculate the sample size, selecting around 200 caregivers of psychotic patients in Kathmandu, Nepal. Data were collected through questionnaires, focusing on nonclinical aspects for analysis.

Key message: Social factors were the most commonly reported in relation to psychosis, though biological and psychological factors also played a role, supporting the biopsychosocial model. The emotional impact on families was the most significant, followed by financial, social, and health effects, highlighting the need for more research into how psychosis affects families.

Quality of Sleep and its Impact on the Academic Performance of Undergraduate Medical Students

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/nmj.v6i1.66653>

Context: Sleep disturbance is a common issue that affects cognitive and academic performance, as well as overall health. It can significantly impair students' quality of work and education.

Methodology: This cross-sectional study was conducted among 280 undergraduate medical students at KIST Medical College in Kathmandu, Nepal, between May and June 2024.

Participants from various academic years completed self-reported questionnaires, including the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index.

Key message: Around 30% of medical students reported poor sleep quality, with both male and female students equally affected. Poor sleep was linked to lower academic performance and negatively impacted physical and social health, highlighting the need for awareness programs about the importance of healthy sleep patterns.

Exploring the medicine cost of managing Diabetes Mellitus in Nepal: A cross-sectional analysis of oral hypoglycaemic medications

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0310706>

Context: Diabetes is a major public health issue globally, and in Nepal, the cost of medication is a significant barrier to effective management. The use of brand-name drugs limits access to more affordable generic options.

Methodology: This cross-sectional study analyzed oral hypoglycemic medications (OHMs) from five hospital pharmacies in Kathmandu, online pharmacy platforms, and a government database. Price variations were examined, and their association with medicine characteristics was statistically tested.

Key message: Significant price variations exist among oral hypoglycemic medicines (OHMs) in Nepal, despite local production of most of these drugs. Addressing these variations through effective drug policies is essential to ensure affordable access to diabetes medications without causing financial strain on patients.

Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) in Nepal: Current Challenges and Opportunities in their role in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Screening and Diagnosis

DOI: <https://nepjol.info/index.php/ohjn/article/view/72511/55321>

Context: Nepal's Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) have significantly improved maternal and child health but are underutilized in addressing the rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Methodology: This was a viewpoint.

Key message: FCHVs capacity needs to be enhanced to address the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Strengthening their skills in NCD screening and diagnosis, alongside evaluating and addressing factors affecting their motivation and effectiveness, is essential for improving community health outcomes.

Piloting Implementation Design and Preliminary Readiness for Universal Suicide Risk Screening Program in Emergency Department of a Tertiary Care Centre, Nepal: A Mixed-Method Study.

DOI: [10.31729/jnma.8832](https://doi.org/10.31729/jnma.8832)

Context: Suicide rates are disproportionately high in developing countries, yet there is a lack of effective health system strategies for detection and prevention.

Methodology: This pilot study employed a co-designed implementation trial in a Nepalese emergency department to assess the feasibility of a suicide risk screening program. Data were gathered using focus groups, ethnography, and phased coaching to refine the screening approach.

Key message: Training and co-designed strategies can enhance staff readiness and confidence to implement suicide screening programs, even in challenging settings. Overcoming barriers like stigma and distrust in referral processes is essential to ensure long-term success and sustainability of such initiatives.

Coping strategies employed by older Nepalese migrant women to manage their mental distress in the UK: A qualitative research

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0310832>

Context: Mental health is a pressing global concern. Older Nepalese migrant women face unique challenges and often rely on specific coping strategies to manage mental distress in a foreign environment.

Methodology: This was a qualitative study done using narrative approach among twenty Nepalese older women living in London.

Key message: Nepalese older women in the UK manage mental distress using problem-focused strategies like seeking resources, emotion-focused approaches such as social support, and spiritual practices like prayer. Social interventions that build on their coping abilities are crucial for enhancing mental wellbeing.

Lung cancer risk and its potential association with PM2.5 in Bagmati province, Nepal—A spatiotemporal study from 2012 to 2021

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2024.1490973>

Context: Lung cancer is one of the major causes of death in the world. The relationship between long-term exposure to particulate matter (PM2.5) and lung cancer risk remains uncertain, especially in low-income countries.

Methodology: This spatiotemporal study analyzed the relationship between lung cancer and PM2.5 levels using data from 2012 to 2021. The study employed global spatial autocorrelation

tests, hotspot analysis, bivariate statistical analysis, and geographically weighted regression (GWR) to explore potential associations.

Key message: Connection between exposure to PM2.5 and lung cancer rates was seen, with significant variations across different regions. Public health interventions targeting air pollution could help reduce the risk of lung cancer, and further research is needed to explore other environmental factors contributing to the disease.

Social determinants of the mental health of pregnant women in Nepal: Stakeholder perspectives

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0314736>

Context: Mental health is considered as an essential part of reproductive health especially, pregnancy. Women during pregnancy are at a greater risk of experiencing poor mental health, which is one of the major global public health issues.

Methodology: The study used in-depth interviews with eight stakeholders to gather perspectives. The data collected were analyzed thematically using an inductive approach to identify key themes.

Key message: Pregnant women in Nepal face a significant risk of poor mental health due to factors such as lack of social support, limited access to maternal health services, and the influence of socioeconomic and cultural contexts. A comprehensive approach that addresses these challenges should be integrated into policies and practices to better support the mental wellbeing of pregnant women.

The impact of household wealth status on anxiety and depression of Nepal reproductive age women: Propensity score matching analysis

Link: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e40610>

Context: Mental health issues, especially anxiety and depression, are major global health concerns affecting people of all ages and regions. Link between mental health and socioeconomic factors like household wealth is acknowledged but less studied.

Methodology: This study used data from the 2022 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey, including a sample of 7,411 women aged 15-49 and assessed anxiety and depression using the GAD-7 and PHQ-9 scales, respectively, and employed Propensity Score Matching (PSM).

Key message: Women from wealthier households experience lower levels of anxiety and depression. Improving household wealth status could be an effective strategy to enhance mental health among reproductive-age women, potentially breaking the cycle of poverty and improving overall well-being.

We thank you all for joining our initiative to promote evidence-informed policymaking and promote public awareness of the non-communicable disease (NCDs) and related issues in Nepal- we are committed to staying up to date with the latest NCD research in Nepal.

This issue covers a summary of scientific publications on NCDs in Nepal for the month of December 2024.

Should you have colleagues who'd like to receive these updates via email (ncdwatchnepal@gmail.com)

Individual summary of the round-up is also available on our social media outlets:

- ⇒ Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NCDWatchNepal>
- ⇒ Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NCDWatchNepal>
- ⇒ LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ncd-watch-nepal>

Please join us and share with relevant colleagues. As always, previous editions of the round-up are available in our archive here at

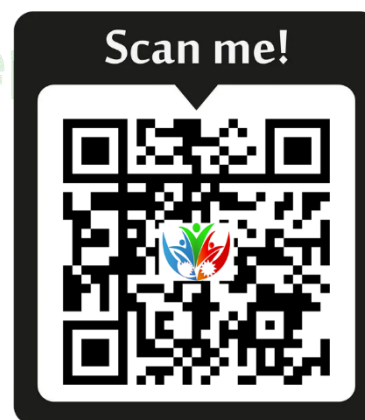
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Publications



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