

## HIGHLIGHT OF THIS ISSUE

### **Self-harm & Suicidal Behaviours Among Undergraduate Students in Nepal**

#### **Introduction:**

Self-harm and suicide are critical yet under-studied issues among young people in Nepal particularly university students navigating academic pressure, social transitions, and family expectations.

#### **Key Message:**

A cross-sectional survey of 538 undergraduates in Gandaki Province assessed self-harm and psychological distress using standardized tools such as the Deliberate Self-Harm Behaviour Scale and the General Health Questionnaire-28.

#### **Methodology:**

Relationship difficulties and family mental health problems strongly contribute to self-harm and suicidal thoughts, underscoring the need for campus-based mental health support and early intervention.

RELATIONS  
STIGMA  
WORRIED  
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
GRIEF  
ANXIETY  
PHOBIA  
GENETICS  
ATTITUDE  
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POST-TRAMATIC  
DEPRESSION  
EMOTIONS  
DRUGS  
COGNITI



*Making non-communicable diseases a national priority*

# **NCD - RESEARCH ROUNDUP**

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## Roundup Summary

In December 2025, our review of non-communicable diseases and mental health literature in Nepal identified 38 published articles. The majority of studies focused on mental health topics including depression, anxiety, PTSD, and psychosocial wellbeing, with particular attention to vulnerable populations such as students, caregivers, and migrants. Cardiovascular health, especially hypertension and obesity, featured prominently alongside research on cancer, diabetes, and substance abuse (notably tobacco use). Other notable areas included oral health, respiratory conditions like chronic bronchitis, malnutrition, and multimorbidity.

### Prevalence and associated factors of postpartum depression among women in putalibajar municipality

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jpan.v14i2.86050>

**Context:** Postpartum depression (PPD) is a non-psychotic mood disorder that can onset after delivery and persist for weeks or months, significantly affecting maternal health and child development. Globally, PPD has been extensively studied, but research remains limited in Nepal despite its public health importance. This study focuses on identifying PPD prevalence and associated factors in a specific Nepali municipality to address this evidence gap.

**Methodology:** A community-based cross-sectional study was conducted from October 2019 to March 2020 among 263 married women in the extended postpartum period in Putalibajar municipality, Gandaki Province. Data were gathered through face-to-face interviews using a structured schedule, with PPD measured via the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS). Associations were assessed using chi-square tests, and logistic regression determined the strength of relationships between variables.

**Key message:** The prevalence of PPD was 10.6%, indicating that one in ten women experienced symptoms. Husbands' alcohol consumption (AOR=5.582) and intimate partner violence during pregnancy (AOR=9.134) were strongly associated with higher PPD risk. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions addressing domestic violence and alcohol use to mitigate PPD in Nepali communities.

### Help-seeking sources and intentions towards depression among undergraduate students in Nepal: A cross-sectional study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.62065/bjhs664>

**Context:** Depression significantly affects various aspects of life, especially among students, yet many adults do not seek professional help despite effective treatments being available. Understanding the patterns and factors influencing help-seeking behavior in students is crucial to address this gap.

**Methodology:** A web-based cross-sectional survey was conducted with 450 undergraduate students in Nepal using the General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (GHSQ) to assess their intentions and behaviors regarding seeking help for depression. Statistical tests like Chi-square and Pearson correlation were used to identify associations between help-seeking sources and demographic factors.

**Key message:** Students tend to prefer seeking help from family and friends over professionals when dealing with depression, largely due to stigma and fear of criticism. To promote better mental health support, educational institutions should implement targeted programs that improve awareness and encourage healthy help-seeking behaviors among students.

## Differential Impact of Pictorial Health Warnings on Combustible and Smokeless Tobacco: A Longitudinal Policy Review and Trend Analysis in Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jobh.vii3.88476>

**Context:** Tobacco use remains a major public health issue in Nepal, with ongoing efforts to reduce smoking through policies like pictorial health warnings (PHWs) on tobacco packaging. While smoking rates have declined, the use of smokeless tobacco remains relatively unchanged, indicating gaps in current tobacco control measures.

**Methodology:** This study reviewed Nepal's tobacco control policies over time by analyzing national legislation, government directives, and court records related to PHWs. Tobacco use trends were examined using data from the WHO STEPS surveys conducted in 2007, 2013, and 2019 to evaluate changes in smoking and smokeless tobacco prevalence.

**Key message:** Increasing the size of health warnings on cigarette packs in Nepal helped reduce smoking rates, but had little impact on smokeless tobacco use. To effectively control all forms of tobacco, a broader and more comprehensive approach is needed alongside packaging regulations.

## Traditionally used ethnomedicinal plants for the treatment of cancer and diabetes in Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/botor.v16i12.88796>

**Context:** Traditional herbal medicines are deeply rooted in Nepal's healthcare system and cultural

practices, especially for managing chronic conditions like cancer and diabetes. Despite growing evidence of their potential benefits, there is limited comprehensive documentation and scientific validation of these plant-based remedies.

**Methodology:** This study conducted a literature review by analyzing over 70 published articles to catalog medicinal plants used by traditional healers in Nepal. Information on plant species, parts used, and their applications for treating cancer and diabetes was systematically compiled.

**Key message:** Many traditional medicinal plants in Nepal show promise for treating cancer and diabetes, highlighting the importance of preserving and scientifically exploring this knowledge to develop safer, effective treatments in the future.

### Stress and its associated factors among caregiver of cancer patient attending a selected hospital, Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/nmmj.v6i2.89107>

**Context:** Caring for cancer patients can be highly stressful, yet the specific stress levels and factors affecting caregivers in Nepal are not well understood. Identifying these stress patterns is important to support caregivers' wellbeing.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted among caregivers of cancer patients at a hospital in Nepal. Data were collected using structured interviews with standardized tools—the Kingston Caregiver Stress Scale and Caregiver Burden Inventory—and participants provided written consent.

**Key message:** Most caregivers of cancer patients experience moderate stress, especially those closely related to the patient and those caring for longer illness durations, highlighting the need for support systems to ease their burden.

### Association between Adiposity Indices and Blood Pressure among Young Adults: A Cross Sectional Study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jonmc.v14i2.87908>

**Context:** Obesity is increasing rapidly in low- and middle-income countries and is closely linked to higher risks of cardiovascular diseases. Understanding how different measures of body fat relate to blood pressure among young adults is important for early prevention.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted at Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences with 426 participants aged 18–30 years. Anthropometric measurements and blood pressure were recorded, and various obesity markers like BMI, body adiposity index, waist-hip ratio, and waist-height ratio were calculated and analyzed statistically.

**Key message:** Young overweight or obese females are more likely to develop high blood pressure in the future, highlighting the need for early lifestyle interventions to prevent hypertension.

## Prevalence and Associated Factors of Hypertension: A Community-Based Cross-Sectional Study in a Rural Municipality of Eastern Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jonmc.v14i2.87935>

**Context:** Hypertension is a leading preventable cause of early death, yet in Nepal, many cases remain undiagnosed or poorly managed. Lower blood pressure thresholds could help identify at-risk individuals earlier, but evidence on this is limited, especially in rural communities.

**Methodology:** A community-based cross-sectional study was conducted among 357 adults in a rural area using multistage random sampling. Blood pressure was measured following ACC/AHA 2017 guidelines, and data on demographics, lifestyle, and socioeconomic factors were collected through a structured questionnaire.

**Key message:** Hypertension is highly common in rural Nepal, with many people unaware or untreated. Education, lifestyle habits, and socioeconomic status play important roles, highlighting the need for better awareness, screening, and management programs.

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## Factors Associated With Hypertension Among Adult Clients in Provincial Hospital

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.59779/jiomnepal.1437>

**Context:** Hypertension is a growing global health issue largely influenced by modifiable lifestyle factors. Without timely intervention, it can place a significant strain on healthcare systems, especially in low-resource settings.

**Methodology:** A hospital-based case-control study was conducted at Lumbini Provincial Hospital with 160 adults (80 hypertensive cases and 80 controls). Data were collected through face-to-face interviews using the WHO STEPwise tool and analyzed with statistical methods including odds ratios.

**Key message:** Most factors leading to high blood pressure can be changed through healthier lifestyle choices. Raising awareness about these behaviors is essential to prevent hypertension and reduce related health problems in the community.

## Self-harm and suicidal behaviours among undergraduate students in Gandaki Province, Nepal: a cross-sectional study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjph-2025-003465>

**Context:** Self-harm and suicide are serious public health concerns affecting young people worldwide, especially adolescents and young adults. Despite their high impact, there is limited data on these behaviors and their contributing factors among university students in Nepal.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among 538 undergraduate students from four schools in Vyas Municipality, Nepal. Standardized tools—the Deliberate Self-Harm Behaviour Scale and the General Health Questionnaire-28—were used to assess self-harm and suicidal behaviors along with associated psychological factors.

**Key message:** Difficulties in personal relationships and family mental health problems significantly contribute to the high rates of self-harm and suicidal thoughts among Nepalese students. Addressing these social and emotional challenges is crucial to reduce these risky behaviors.

## Awareness on cervical cancer and screening practice among married women in selected wards of Pokhara Metropolitan city

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jgmc-n.v18i2.86138>

**Context:** Cervical cancer remains a significant health challenge in Nepal, with many women unaware of prevention and screening options. Despite its preventability, the disease continues to cause high rates of illness and death due to low awareness and limited screening.

**Methodology:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 257 married women aged 30 to 60 in Pokhara Metropolitan City, using simple random sampling. Data were collected via structured face-to-face interviews and analyzed with statistical tools including chi-square and correlation tests.

**Key message:** Many married women in Nepal lack sufficient knowledge about cervical cancer and do not participate in regular screening. Improving education and encouraging screening can help reduce the impact of this preventable disease.

## Agreement between cervical cancer screening methods in Nepal: A cross-sectional study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jgmc-n.v18i2.82061>

**Context:** Cervical cancer is a major health issue in Nepal, with multiple screening methods like VIA, HPV DNA testing, and liquid-based cytology used for early detection. However, how well these methods agree with each other in detecting cervical abnormalities is still unclear.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was done on 68 women aged 30 to 60 at a maternity hospital, where all participants underwent VIA, HPV DNA testing, and liquid-based cytology. Positive cases from any test were further examined through biopsy, and data were analyzed to assess the agreement between these screening methods.

**Key message:** The study found that HPV DNA testing and liquid-based cytology had better agreement compared to VIA, but larger studies are needed to confirm these findings and improve cervical cancer screening accuracy in Nepal.

## Positive Psychology Interventions for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Among Earthquake Survivors in Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.33470/2997-7088.1058>

**Context:** Natural disasters like the 2015 and 2023 earthquakes in Nepal have caused lasting psychological trauma, but existing PTSD treatments may not fully address the unique cultural and contextual factors present in Nepal. There is a need to understand how local beliefs and coping systems influence mental health care after such events.

**Methodology:** This conceptual study reviews existing literature and proposes a culturally tailored counseling framework that combines positive psychology, forgiveness practices, and community-based coping with Nepalese cultural perspectives, aiming to improve mental health interventions post-disaster.

**Key message:** Effective mental health support in Nepal requires adapting counseling approaches to respect local culture and strengths, helping survivors heal in ways that align with their traditions and community values.

## Effect of Music on Cardiovascular Reactivity and Pain Tolerance During Cold Pressor Test

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/mjen.v4i02.88430>

**Context:** Stress and pain are common issues, and music has been suggested as a simple, affordable way to help reduce both. Understanding how music affects physical responses like blood pressure and pain tolerance can support its use as a non-drug treatment.

**Methodology:** This study used a within-subject crossover design with 80 healthy young adults who experienced four conditions—rest, music alone, cold pressor test (CPT), and CPT with music. Blood pressure, pulse, oxygen saturation, and pain tolerance were measured and compared using paired tests.

**Key message:** Listening to music can lower blood pressure and heart rate while increasing pain tolerance, making it a helpful and safe method to manage stress and pain without medication.

## Infertility Induced Silent Stress among Couples in Bharatpur Metropolitan City Chitwan, Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jjis.v14i1.87857>

**Context:** Infertility is a sensitive issue that causes significant emotional and social stress for couples, yet it is rarely openly discussed. This problem is especially pronounced in both urban and rural communities, where societal pressures and personal struggles affect couples' well-being and daily lives.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional case study was conducted at Manakamana Hospital in Bharatpur, Nepal, involving 16 infertility cases from both urban and rural wards. Data were collected through phone interviews with couples using standardized questions, supplemented by key informant interviews with local health officials and analyzed with Excel and SPSS.

**Key message:** Infertility deeply affects couples' mental health and social lives, causing shame and stress that impact their daily functioning. Increasing access to counseling and effective treatments is essential to support affected couples and improve their quality of life..

## Analysis of traditional risk factors for ischemic heart disease in Nepalese females with anginal chest pain

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jaim.v14i2.88387>

**Context:** Ischemic heart disease (IHD) has become a leading cause of death among women worldwide, yet its risk factors and impact are less explored in Nepalese women. Women with angina often receive different treatment than men, highlighting the need to better understand traditional risk factors for IHD in this population.

**Methodology:** This hospital-based case-control study was conducted over one year with 155 female patients with angina and 155 healthy female controls matched by age. Data were collected through clinical history, physical exams, and laboratory tests, and analyzed using bivariate and multivariate statistics with SPSS.

**Key message:** Smoking, diabetes, and overweight or obesity are key risk factors that significantly increase the chance of ischemic heart disease among Nepalese women with angina. Addressing these factors is crucial to improve women's heart health in Nepal.

## Management of Cardiovascular Medical Emergencies: An Institutional Based Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice among Dental Students

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/nmcj.v27i4.88104>

**Context:** Cardiac emergencies can occur unexpectedly in dental clinics due to patient stress, yet the preparedness of dental students to manage these emergencies in Nepal is not well documented. Understanding their knowledge, attitude, and practice is crucial to ensure patient safety during dental care.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted from June to August 2025 among 138 dental

students in Kathmandu using a validated 22-question survey to assess their knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to cardiovascular emergencies. Statistical analysis involved chi-square tests and regression to examine differences by age, gender, and academic level.

**Key message:** Many dental students lack sufficient knowledge and confidence in handling cardiac emergencies, with few having practical experience or training. Improving clinical exposure and emergency training is essential to prepare future dental professionals to respond effectively in critical situations.

## Descriptive Study of Different Types of Road Traffic Accidents at a Tertiary Care Centre in Kathmandu City

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/nmcj.v27i4.88103>

**Context:** Road traffic accidents (RTAs) are a significant public health concern, especially in low- and middle-income countries like Nepal, where challenging terrain, poor infrastructure, and traffic management contribute to high accident rates. Young males, particularly those using two-wheelers, are disproportionately affected by these accidents.

**Methodology:** This retrospective hospital-based study reviewed all road traffic accident cases from Kathmandu presenting at Nepal Medical College Teaching Hospital during 2021. Data on demographics, injury patterns, timing, and vehicle types were collected and analyzed using SPSS software.

**Key message:** Young male two-wheeler riders face the greatest risk of RTAs, with extremity and head injuries being most common. Strengthening helmet use, traffic law enforcement, infrastructure, and awareness programs are vital to lowering accident rates and injury severity.

## Self-Esteem and Associated Factors among Medical Students of a Private Medical College in Koshi Province

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jcmsn.v2i4.87895>

**Context:** Self-esteem, which affects mental health and personal confidence, is often challenged among medical students due to academic pressures, financial concerns, and social stress. This issue has gained attention as a public health concern, especially within student populations.

**Methodology:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 230 medical students at a private college in Koshi Province, Nepal, using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale through online questionnaires. Data analysis involved chi-square tests to explore associations between self-esteem

levels and various factors.

**Key message:** While most medical students maintain normal self-esteem, a significant portion struggles with low self-worth, especially females. Initiatives to boost self-esteem are important to help future doctors build confidence and resilience.

## A qualitative exploration of how type 2 diabetes shapes health-related quality of life in Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12982-025-01308-9>

**Context:** Living with Type 2 diabetes affects many aspects of a person's quality of life, influenced by physical health, emotional well-being, social support, and healthcare experiences. Challenges like cultural dietary habits, social stigma, and healthcare costs add to the burden for people managing this condition in Nepal.

**Methodology:** This qualitative study used five focus group discussions with 40 individuals living with Type 2 diabetes in Nepal, analyzing their experiences through thematic analysis with NVIVO software, guided by a recognized quality of life model.

**Key message:** Managing diabetes affects physical health and emotional and social life deeply. Supportive family, community programs, and improved healthcare access tailored to local culture and gender can help improve overall well-being for those with diabetes.

## Developing a theory-based health education intervention to prevent adolescent students from smokeless tobacco use

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-025-26000-0>

**Context:** Smokeless tobacco use is increasing among adolescent students in Nepal, despite its known health risks. Many students lack proper knowledge and hold misconceptions about its dangers, highlighting the need for targeted educational interventions.

**Methodology:** The study involved four focus group discussions with ninth-grade students to explore their knowledge and attitudes, followed by development and pilot testing of a health education module based on protection motivation theory with 16 participants. The module's reliability and validity were assessed using feedback and statistical measures.

**Key message:** A carefully designed, theory-based education program can effectively improve students'

understanding of smokeless tobacco risks and equip them with skills to resist its use, helping to reduce tobacco consumption among youth.

## Prevalence of anxiety among adolescent students of Ilam, Nepal

**DOI:** [10.1097/GH9.000000000000600](https://doi.org/10.1097/GH9.000000000000600)

**Context:** Adolescents face significant psychological challenges during their developmental stage, making them prone to anxiety disorders. In Nepal, the mental health of young people is often overlooked, which may lead to lasting negative effects.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was carried out in Ilam district among 416 adolescents aged 13–19 from both public and private schools, using the Nepali version of the GAD-7 questionnaire to measure anxiety levels. Participants were randomly selected, and statistical tests examined links between anxiety and various demographic or lifestyle factors.

**Key message:** More than half of adolescents in this area experience anxiety, especially girls, private school students, and those less active outdoors, highlighting the importance of early mental health screening and encouraging physical activity in schools to support youth wellbeing.

## Prevalence of the Double Burden of Malnutrition in Nepalese Students Aged 6–18 Years: An Urgent Call for Intervention

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1111/nbu.70040>

**Context:** Nepal is facing a complex nutrition challenge where undernutrition and overnutrition coexist among children, reflecting a double burden of malnutrition. This issue varies between rural and urban areas, as well as between public and private schools, highlighting different nutrition problems within the same population.

**Methodology:** A large cross-sectional study was conducted in Kaski district involving 11,782 students aged 6–18 years from 111 randomly chosen schools. Researchers collected sociodemographic data via questionnaires and measured height and weight to classify nutritional status using WHO growth standards.

**Key message:** Both undernutrition and overnutrition affect Nepalese schoolchildren, with undernutrition more common in rural and public schools, and overnutrition in urban and private schools. Urgent, customized nutrition programs in schools are essential to address these contrasting problems effectively.

## Social anxiety disorder and its associated factors among adolescents of higher secondary schools of Birendranagar Municipality in Surkhet District: A cross-sectional study in Nepal

**DOI:** [10.1097/MD.00000000000046845](https://doi.org/10.1097/MD.00000000000046845)

**Context:** Social anxiety disorder (SAD) is a widespread mental health problem among adolescents, leading to social withdrawal, low confidence, and serious risks such as substance abuse. In Nepal, factors influencing SAD in young people are not well studied, despite its growing impact on their mental health and social functioning.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was carried out among 428 adolescents from government and private higher secondary schools in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet. Participants were selected through multistage random sampling and data were gathered using a self-administered questionnaire, with statistical analysis including correlation and group comparison tests.

**Key message:** SAD is common among Nepalese adolescents and is linked to loneliness, social media addiction, low self-esteem, and lower family income. Early identification and school-based support programs focusing on mental health awareness, skill-building, and family involvement are crucial to help affected youth.

## Quality of life among tuberculosis patients in Lalitpur, Nepal: A cross-sectional study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhip.2025.100712>

**Context:** Tuberculosis (TB) patients often experience a reduced quality of life due to physical, psychological, and social challenges. Factors such as chronic illnesses and socioeconomic difficulties can worsen their overall well-being, highlighting the need to understand these influences for better patient care.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among TB patients attending 23 DOTS centers in Lalitpur district. Researchers used a structured questionnaire with the WHOQOL tool to measure health-related quality of life and applied multivariate logistic regression to identify factors linked to poorer outcomes.

**Key message:** Chronic health problems, multidrug-resistant TB, and socioeconomic hardships significantly lower the quality of life in TB patients. Addressing these issues through integrated medical

care, psychosocial support, and social assistance can improve patient well-being and reduce health inequalities.

## Metabolic Syndrome and Aggravated Cardiometabolic Parameters among Nepalese Adults with Subclinical Hypothyroidism

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jmmihs.v1o12.86842>

**Context:** Subclinical hypothyroidism (SCH) and metabolic syndrome (MetS) are common conditions that increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Thyroid hormones influence metabolism, linking SCH with metabolic disturbances, but the extent of this association in Nepalese populations is not well understood.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted on 111 adults undergoing thyroid tests at a hospital in Kathmandu. Participants were grouped by thyroid status, and measurements of blood pressure, BMI, waist circumference, and biochemical markers including glucose and lipid profiles were collected. MetS was defined using established criteria, and statistical analyses examined differences and correlations.

**Key message:** SCH is closely linked to unhealthy metabolic changes and a higher occurrence of metabolic syndrome, especially in middle-aged females. Identifying individuals with both SCH and MetS is important for targeted efforts to prevent diabetes and heart disease.

## Prevalence of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Chronic Kidney Disease Patients Undergoing Hemodialysis

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/jmmihs.v1o12.86811>

**Context:** Patients with chronic kidney disease on hemodialysis frequently face psychological challenges that can worsen their treatment outcomes and quality of life. In Nepal, there is a lack of data on the mental health status of these patients, making it difficult to address their emotional needs effectively.

**Methodology:** This cross-sectional study involved 143 hemodialysis patients at a hospital in Kathmandu. Data were collected using a demographic questionnaire and a validated Nepali version of the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21). Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, correlations, and chi-square tests.

**Key message:** Depression, anxiety, and stress are common among CKD patients undergoing dialysis, especially those with lower education levels. Regular mental health assessments and supportive care

should be integrated into dialysis treatment to improve patient well-being.

## Prehypertension and its associated factors among government employees in Tilottama Municipality of Rupandehi District, Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0338625>

**Context:** Government employees often face work-related stress, irregular hours, and limited physical activity, which increase their risk of developing high blood pressure and related health problems. Early detection of prehypertension is crucial to prevent serious cardiovascular complications.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was done among 333 government employees in Tilottama Municipality using systematic random sampling. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire adapted from the WHO STEPs Survey and analyzed with SPSS, using logistic regression to identify factors linked to prehypertension.

**Key message:** Nearly one-third of government workers showed early signs of high blood pressure. Regular screening and workplace health programs promoting exercise, stress management, and healthy eating are important to reduce hypertension risks.

## Depressive symptoms among senior citizens in Baijanath Rural Municipality, Nepal: a community-based cross-sectional study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-025-06775-y>

**Context:** Depression is a common yet underrecognized issue among elderly populations in rural Nepal, where many face economic challenges, health problems, and physical limitations. Limited data exist on how these factors affect mental health in this vulnerable group.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted with 205 senior citizens aged 60 and above in a rural municipality of Nepal. Data were gathered through face-to-face interviews using the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15), and statistical analyses identified factors linked to depression.

**Key message:** More than half of older adults in rural Nepal experience depression, especially those with poor health and financial struggles. Improving chronic disease care, physical support, and economic aid can help enhance their mental well-being.

## A multi-country cohort study evaluating the prevalence, risk factors, lung function and clinical outcomes of chronic bronchitis in low- and middle-income countries

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1183/13993003.01435-2025>

**Context:** Chronic bronchitis is a frequent condition that can signal the onset of COPD and is linked with poor respiratory health. Its prevalence and contributing factors are especially concerning in low- and middle-income countries, where environmental and health risks are often higher.

**Methodology:** A population-based study was conducted among adults aged 40 and above in three LMICs: Nepal, Peru, and Uganda. Researchers assessed chronic bronchitis using symptom criteria and analyzed data from 9,664 participants to identify risk factors and health outcomes through multivariable regression.

**Key message:** Chronic bronchitis affects many adults in resource-limited settings and is driven by preventable factors like tobacco smoke, indoor air pollution, and previous lung diseases. Tackling these risks can help lower illness severity and hospitalizations, improving quality of life.

## Resilience and its determinants among family caregivers of palliative care patients in Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12904-025-01967-0>

**Context:** As more patients require palliative care, caregivers play a critical role but often face significant challenges. Understanding what influences caregivers' ability to cope and stay resilient is important for improving support systems in low-resource settings like Nepal.

**Methodology:** This cross-sectional study involved 422 family caregivers from five palliative care centers in Nepal, identified using a tool designed for low-income settings. Caregiver resilience was measured using the Nepali version of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, with statistical analysis conducted to find factors linked to resilience.

**Key message:** Caregivers' own health and the type of illness their patients have greatly affect their resilience. Regular health assessments and tailored support programs for caregivers can help ease their burden and strengthen care quality in palliative settings.

## Mediating pathways between area-level deprivation and hypertension in Nepal: the role of nutritional status, food insecurity, and health behaviors

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-025-25471-5>

**Context:** Hypertension rates vary across different areas, influenced by social and economic factors, but the reasons behind these differences are not well understood, especially in low- and middle-income countries like Nepal. The study focuses on how factors like food insecurity, lifestyle behaviors, and nutritional status might explain the link between area-level deprivation and hypertension.

**Methodology:** Using nationally representative data from Nepal's 2016 Demographic and Health Survey, the study analyzed adults aged 15 and above through a two-level structural equation model, considering individuals nested within geographic areas. Area deprivation was measured by a composite index, while mediators like BMI, smoking, alcohol use, and food insecurity were examined for their roles in the relationship with hypertension.

**Key message:** In Nepal, hypertension is more common in wealthier areas, largely because of differences in nutritional status reflected by BMI. Public health efforts should address both community environments and individual nutrition to better manage hypertension risks.

## Distress among primary caregivers of patients with cancer: a cross-sectional study

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/spcare-2025-005932>

**Context:** Caregivers of cancer patients often face intense emotional and practical challenges, leading to high levels of distress. Despite its importance, there is limited data on how prevalent and severe this distress is among caregivers in Nepal, along with the factors influencing it.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study surveyed 173 primary caregivers at an oncology unit in Dharan, Nepal, using an interview-based questionnaire including the NCCN Distress Thermometer to measure distress levels. Distress was categorized into mild, moderate, and severe based on standardized scoring, and associations with demographic and clinical factors were analyzed.

**Key message:** Most caregivers of cancer patients in Nepal experience significant distress, especially those older than 30, married, or with lower education, and those caring for certain cancer types. Regular distress screening and targeted support for caregivers are essential to improve their well-being and enhance patient care.

## Health-seeking challenges among older adults with hypertension in Nepal: a phenomenological study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-025-06730-x>

**Context:** Hypertension is increasingly common among older adults in Nepal, but many face complex barriers in accessing healthcare. The perspectives of elderly patients, their caregivers, and healthcare providers on these challenges remain underexplored, limiting understanding of the multifaceted issues involved.

**Methodology:** This qualitative study used 24 in-depth interviews with older adults and healthcare providers, along with 2 focus group discussions involving 18 caregivers in Central Nepal. Data were collected in Nepali, transcribed, translated, and analyzed thematically using both inductive and deductive approaches guided by the socio-ecological model.

**Key message:** Older adults with hypertension face multiple barriers to care, including personal health decline, limited family support, poor communication, infrastructure issues, and weak healthcare systems. Addressing these challenges through improved geriatric services, community support, and better policy implementation is essential for equitable hypertension management in Nepal's aging population.

## Coping strategies among poverty-affected adolescents experiencing or at risk of depression and anxiety in Nepal: a qualitative study

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-03698-6>

**Context:** Adolescents living in poverty face ongoing stress that influences their mental health, often leading to unhealthy ways of coping. In Nepal, little is known about how these young people manage stress and challenges in their daily environments such as home, school, and among peers.

**Methodology:** This qualitative study involved 30 adolescents aged 11 to 19 from informal settlements in Kathmandu. Researchers conducted detailed narrative interviews and collected weekly journal entries over several weeks, analyzing the data thematically to understand coping strategies.

**Key message:** Adolescents in urban poverty use both helpful and harmful coping methods to handle stress, varying by setting and age. Tailored psychological support focusing on teaching effective coping skills can help these youths better navigate their challenges and improve their mental well-being.

## Prevalence and associated factors of depression, anxiety and stress among wives of international migrant workers: a community-based cross-sectional study in ward 5 of Gauradaha municipality, Jhapa, Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2025-101373>

**Context:** Wives of international migrant workers often face significant emotional challenges, including high levels of depression, anxiety, and stress, due to prolonged separation and related social and financial pressures. Despite the growing number of migrant workers, little is known about the mental health status of their spouses left behind in Nepal.

**Methodology:** This community-based cross-sectional study was conducted in Ward 5 of Gauradaha Municipality, Jhapa, involving 179 wives of migrant workers aged 20–49 years whose husbands had been away for at least six months. Mental health status was measured using the DASS-21 scale, and statistical analyses identified factors linked to psychological distress.

**Key message:** More than half of these women experience mental health problems linked to financial stress, debt, and communication difficulties with their spouses. Supporting financial stability, encouraging regular contact, and providing occupational support are vital to improving their well-being.

## Mental health and psychosocial well-being of migrant workers and their families: policy and practice of Nepal

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckaf180.359>

**Context:** While foreign employment has boosted Nepal's economy through remittances, the mental health and social challenges faced by migrants and their families often receive little attention. There is a growing need to understand how mental health policies and services are implemented, especially in remote areas.

**Methodology:** This study used a mixed-methods approach, gathering quantitative data from health facilities and qualitative insights from self-help groups, peer-support networks, and local stakeholders across seven municipalities in two provinces between 2022 and 2024.

**Key message:** Expanding community-based mental health services and support groups has improved awareness, reduced stigma, and enhanced economic and social well-being, leading to fewer suicides. Strengthening policies and increasing resources are essential to sustain and expand these mental health initiatives at local and provincial levels.

## Psychosocial determinants and impact in mental health of Nepalese migrants

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckaf180.180>

**Context:** Nepalese migrant workers face various psychosocial challenges linked to their mental health, influenced by factors like work conditions, family debt, and legal status. Despite the economic benefits of migration, these risks significantly affect their well-being.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted from July 2022 to June 2023, involving 1,058 returned migrants from 132 local municipalities. Mental health was assessed using culturally adapted versions of the Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSC-25) and WHO Disability Assessment Schedule (WHO-DAS 2).

**Key message:** Mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and functional difficulties are common among returned migrant workers, driven by work and health-related stressors. Tailored mental health services are urgently needed to address these specific challenges faced by this population.

## A qualitative exploration of community perception on dementia and dementia care in Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igaf122.4053>

**Context:** In low- and middle-income countries like Nepal, dementia care is hampered by limited awareness, inadequate healthcare infrastructure, and cultural expectations placing caregiving burdens on families. There is little research on how to effectively support people with dementia and their caregivers within these resource-constrained settings.

**Methodology:** This qualitative study involved focus group discussions with community health workers and in-depth interviews with family caregivers, healthcare providers, and a government official in Nepal. Data were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to explore perspectives on dementia care.

**Key message:** There is a critical need to raise dementia awareness, provide caregiver support, and build healthcare capacity in Nepal. Strengthening community and government initiatives tailored to cultural contexts is essential to improve the quality of life for people with dementia and their families.

## Relationship of parenting styles on depression, anxiety, stress and self-esteem of adolescents

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0332854>

**Context:** Adolescent mental health is influenced by multiple factors, with parenting style playing a key role in shaping their emotional wellbeing. High rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among adolescents highlight the importance of understanding how family dynamics and social factors like bullying affect their mental health.

**Methodology:** This community-based cross-sectional study surveyed 583 school-going adolescents in Bheemdaatt Municipality using validated tools: DASS-21 for depression, anxiety, and stress; Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale; and a Parenting Style questionnaire. Data were analyzed with multivariate logistic regression to explore associations.

**Key message:** Positive parenting significantly impacts adolescent mental health and self-esteem, while negative styles and social issues like bullying increase risks. Schools should implement mental health awareness, counseling, and strict anti-bullying policies to support adolescents' wellbeing.





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 2025.

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

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

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Please join us and share with relevant colleagues. As always, previous editions of the round-up are available in our archive here at <https://ncdwatchnepal.wordpress.com/research-round-up/> [https://nepalhealthfrontiers.org/publication\\_type/ncd-watch-nepal-research-roundup/](https://nepalhealthfrontiers.org/publication_type/ncd-watch-nepal-research-roundup/)

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