

HIGHLIGHT OF THIS ISSUE

**Unmet Needs in Mental Health:
A Cross-Sectional Study on
Contact Coverage Gaps and
Access to Care for Depression
and Anxiety Among Adults in
Kailali, Nepal**

Introduction:

This study examines the severe treatment gap for common mental disorders in Nepal, identifying the primary barriers preventing adults from accessing formal care for depression and anxiety.

Key Message:

A striking treatment gap exists: only 28.3% of adults screening positive for depression or anxiety sought any help, and those who did predominantly turned to traditional healers. Financial costs, a desire for self-reliance, and a lack of awareness demand urgent, multifaceted strategies to connect communities with formal mental health care.

Methodology:

A cross-sectional study of 1,304 adults in Kailali used validated tools (PHQ-9, BAI, BACE) to assess mental health, care coverage, and treatment barriers across municipalities.



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Roundup Summary

In June 2026, our search on non-communicable diseases and mental health-related literature in Nepal yielded nineteen published articles. Most of the studies covered non-communicable diseases and mental health.

Prevalence, Clinical Profiles, Disease Severity, and Patient Outcomes of Alcoholic Liver Disease in a Tertiary Care Hospital of Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.72499>

Context: Alcoholic liver disease (ALD) is a growing chronic, lifestyle-related condition and a major global public health concern. Early detection and intervention are essential to reduce morbidity and mortality. This study was conducted to better understand the clinical profiles, symptom patterns, disease severity, and outcomes of ALD patients in a tertiary care hospital setting in Nepal.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out on 384 patients (aged >20 years) with a history of chronic alcohol intake and clinical signs of liver disease. Participants were admitted to the internal medicine ward of a tertiary care hospital in Nepal between May 12 and November 20, 2023. Using convenience sampling, data were collected on demographics, clinical symptoms, and the Model for End-Stage Liver Disease (MELD) score after obtaining ethical approval.

Key message: The study revealed a male predominance (79.68%), mean age of 46 ± 12.6 years, and high rates of advanced disease. The most common presentations were jaundice (77.34%), abdominal distention (76.56%), and melena (61%). MELD scores indicated severe disease in the majority of patients, with an overall in-hospital mortality rate of 14.06% (higher in females at 17.72% compared to 13.07% in males).

Experiences of Suicide Attempt Survivors in Nepal: A Qualitative Study

DOI: https://link.springer.com/rwe/10.1007/978-981-95-2121-0_10

Context: Suicide attempts are a complex phenomenon influenced by psychological, social, and cultural factors, affecting individuals and society. Despite rising incidence, qualitative research on the lived experiences of suicide survivors remains limited, particularly in understanding how they perceive and interpret their experiences.

Methodology: A qualitative thematic analysis was conducted with 14 suicide attempt survivors selected through purposive sampling. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were carried out using an interview guide. Data were organized, coded, and analyzed using NVivo software to generate themes from participants' experiences.

Key message: Seven key themes emerged: interpersonal conflict, emotional distress, cognitive distortion, social isolation, acute stressors, barriers to help-seeking, coping mechanisms, and post-attempt reflection. Participants reported intense sadness, hopelessness, stigma-related reluctance to seek help, and benefits from hospital-based psychological counseling. The study highlights the need for early psychological intervention, family involvement, and culturally sensitive mental health services to support suicide prevention in Nepal.

Barriers and Facilitators to Mental Health Treatment Utilization Among Second-Generation South Asian Americans

DOI: <https://www.proquest.com/openview/oc69313768045624e7f49c9fd65d7329/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

Context: South Asian Americans face stressors affecting mental health but underutilize services. While general factors have been studied, research on second-generation South Asian Americans (SAA) remains limited.

Methodology: A study of 92 US-born SAA (with parents from South Asian countries including Nepal) examined barriers and facilitators to mental health service use. Regression analysis assessed the influence of attitudes toward services, awareness, acculturation, and provider cultural sensitivity.

Key message: Positive attitudes toward mental health services and greater acculturation to mainstream culture predicted higher service use. Cultural representation in therapy showed an inverse relationship. Findings suggest that outreach efforts should go beyond improving attitudes and awareness, addressing additional unique factors influencing treatment-seeking among second-generation SAA.

Mental well-being and associated factors among performing artists in Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Nepal: a cross-sectional study

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-9940198/v1>

Context: Performing artists face unique occupational stressors such as irregular employment and financial insecurity, which can impact mental well-being. Evidence from low-resource settings like Nepal is limited.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study surveyed 240 performing artists (actors, dancers, singers, etc.) in Kathmandu using snowball sampling. Mental well-being was measured with the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). Descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and multivariable logistic regression were performed.

Key message: 83.3% of participants showed good mental well-being, while 16.7% had poor well-being. Satisfaction with work availability was the only independent predictor of better mental well-being. The study emphasizes the importance of employment stability and calls for targeted occupational and mental health support for performing artists in low-resource settings.

Dengue Risk Mapping Using Remote Sensing Indicator and Machine Learning Models in Kaski

DOI: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Dhurba-Neupane-4/publication/406266672_Dengue_Risk_Mapping_Using_Remote_Sensing_Indicator_and_Machine_Learning_Models_in_Kaski/links/6a2521ef68552924bbffd6ff/Dengue-Risk-Mapping-Using-Remote-Sensing-Indicator-and-Machine-Learning-Models-in-Kaski.pdf

Context: Dengue fever has increased in Nepal's mid-hill districts. Limited temporal modeling using remote sensing data exists for understanding environmental drivers in these areas.

Methodology: A temporal analysis used 84 monthly observations (2019–2025) of dengue incidence in Kaski district. Remotely sensed variables (NDVI, EVI, LST, precipitation) were analyzed with cross-correlation and lag structures. Random Forest, SVM, and Poisson models were compared using time-series cross-validation. Risk maps were generated.

Key message: Lagged environmental variables effectively explained dengue variations. The study provides the first remote sensing-based temporal prediction model for a mid-hill district, offering a framework for early warning systems in Nepal and similar settings.

Prevalence and Contributing Factors of Depression Among the Older Adults in Sundarharaincha Municipality of Eastern Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00469580261452188>

Context: Geriatric depression is rising with the aging population but is understudied in low- and middle-income countries like Nepal.

Methodology: A community-based cross-sectional study in Sundarharaincha Municipality, Morang, used the Nepali version of the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15) among 417 adults aged ≥ 60 years. Logistic regression identified predictors.

Key message: Prevalence of geriatric depression was high at 62.4%. Significant associations included education, family type, perceived respect, financial support, sleep quality, and help-seeking. The findings urge urgent prioritization of mental health services for older adults in Nepal.

Feasibility and acceptability of a multi-level school-based intervention for adolescent mental health in Nepal: a mixed-methods study

DOI: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s13034-026-01111-7>

Context: Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage characterized by rapid biological, psychological, and social changes that increase vulnerability to mental health issues. Schools play a key role in promoting mental well-being due to their accessibility.

Methodology: A feasibility cluster-randomized controlled trial tested the HASHTAG intervention in four secondary schools in Morang district. Quantitative surveys at baseline and 3-month follow-up, along with qualitative interviews, assessed feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary outcomes.

Key message: The intervention was feasible and well-accepted with high attendance and positive feedback on activities such as breathing exercises and the feeling box. Qualitative findings highlighted improvements in school environment, relationships, and reduced bullying. Explanatory analysis showed positive trends in anxiety reduction and social support. A fully powered randomized controlled trial is warranted to evaluate effectiveness and address implementation challenges for broader scale-up in Nepali schools.

Modeling Climate-Driven Risk of Mosquito-Borne Disease Infections: District-Level Assessment of Dengue Fever in Nepal

DOI: <https://www.proquest.com/openview/ee422a9faf95933d3f9e58d9b93affdd/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

Context: Dengue fever is a major vector-borne disease whose transmission dynamics are heavily shaped by climate variables. Nepal's diverse topography creates significant spatial heterogeneity across districts, making localized modeling particularly valuable for public health planning. Accurate district-level modeling is essential for surveillance in Nepal's heterogeneous terrain.

Methodology: A hybrid probabilistic-mechanistic model integrated climate-dependent mosquito dynamics with district-level risk assessment using clustering and spatial autocorrelation analysis on 2022–2023 data. Districts were grouped based on environmental and urbanization characteristics to account for variability. The model was validated using observed incidence data and spatial statistics.

Key message: The model accurately reproduced seasonal patterns and spatial risk distribution, identifying high-risk south-eastern regions. It demonstrates strong potential for short-term forecasting using freely available climate data. These findings support the development of evidence-based early warning systems. The flexible framework can be adapted for other countries facing similar climate-

driven vector-borne disease challenges.

Caregivers' knowledge of palliative care for cancer patients at Bhaktapur Cancer Hospital in Nepal

DOI: https://article.accscience.com/journal/CP/online_first/cp025480082/article_cp0254800821_76ofia.pdf

Context: Palliative care remains severely limited in low-income countries like Nepal despite the rising burden of cancer. Family caregivers play a central role in patient care but frequently lack adequate knowledge and training. Family caregivers often lack sufficient knowledge to provide optimal support.

Methodology: An analytical cross-sectional study of 251 family caregivers at Bhaktapur Cancer Hospital used the validated Palliative Care Knowledge Scale along with bivariate and multivariate logistic regression. Data were collected through structured quantitative surveys. Logistic regression helped identify key predictors of adequate knowledge.

Key message: Only 26% of family caregivers had adequate knowledge, with higher education and prior information from health workers being key predictors. Mass media played a minimal role in awareness. Public awareness campaigns, community dialogues, and media strategies are urgently needed. These efforts could significantly improve palliative care delivery and support for cancer patients in Nepal.

Effectiveness of peer counselling in addressing psychological distress and exposure to violence among sexual and gender minorities in Nepal: a study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

DOI: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s13063-026-09843-9>

Context: LGBTIQ+ individuals face disproportionately high levels of social stressors including discrimination, prejudice, violence, and stigmatization. These stressors significantly impact mental well-being and health-seeking behaviors. Peer-led approaches may offer culturally suitable solutions.

Methodology: The SAATHI study protocol outlines a three-arm randomized controlled trial enrolling over 1,062 participants, combining peer counseling, safety planning, and group sessions with mixed-methods evaluation. Follow-up assessments are planned at multiple time points up to 12 months. A qualitative process evaluation will complement the quantitative findings.

Key message: Primary outcomes focus on reducing psychological distress and exposure to violence, with secondary outcomes covering PTSD, self-esteem, and social support. The low-cost, community-driven design enhances sustainability. If proven effective, SAATHI could reduce health disparities. The

intervention holds strong potential for scale-up across low- and middle-income countries through empowered peer networks.

Unmet Needs in Mental Health: A Cross-Sectional Study on Contact Coverage Gaps and Access to Care for Depression and Anxiety Among Adults in Kailali, Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/brb3.71551>

Context: A large treatment gap exists for common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety in many communities. Despite being highly prevalent, most affected individuals do not receive adequate care. There is a pronounced gap between demand and actual mental health service utilization.

Methodology: A community-based cross-sectional study in Kailali district screened 1,304 adults using PHQ-9, BAI, and the BACE tool to measure contact coverage and barriers. Multistage random sampling was employed to select participants from rural and urban municipalities. Barriers to care were systematically assessed using a validated instrument.

Key message: Only 28.3% of those screening positive contacted any service provider, predominantly traditional healers. Major barriers included cost, self-reliance, preference for alternative care, and lack of awareness. Contact coverage was linked to morbidity severity and service awareness. These results call for multifaceted strategies to address barriers and improve mental health service access in the community.

Psychological Impact of Dengue Fever in Nepal: A Qualitative Study

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/ija.v4i2.95992>

Context: Dengue fever imposes not only physical symptoms but also significant psychological and emotional burdens on survivors. These effects often extend beyond the acute phase of illness. The psychological impact of dengue is frequently under-recognized in affected communities.

Methodology: A qualitative descriptive study interviewed 10 dengue survivors in the Kathmandu Valley and included nurse and psychologist key informants. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used for participant recruitment. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis approach.

Key message: Participants reported intense fear of death, helplessness, anxiety, and lingering emotional effects post-recovery. Coping was mostly passive and family-dependent. The study recommends integrating basic psychological first aid into dengue management protocols.

Strengthening mental health support and community awareness can promote more holistic care for dengue-affected populations in Nepal.

Association between wealth status, behavioral factors, and anxiety symptoms among women in Nepal: A cross-sectional analysis of NDHS 2022 data

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2026.107273>

Context: Anxiety symptoms are common among women worldwide and can significantly affect daily functioning and quality of life. Population-level data are important for identifying specific risk factors in the Nepali context. Anxiety is a natural response experienced by many, but its associated factors need better characterization.

Methodology: Cross-sectional analysis of 2022 NDHS data from 14,845 women aged 15–49 used the GAD-7 scale and weighted multivariate logistic regression adjusting for complex survey design. The survey employed multistage probability-proportional-to-size sampling. Anxiety symptoms were defined using a standardized cut-off score.

Key message: The prevalence of anxiety symptoms was 21.9%, with higher odds among household heads, married women, those in poorer wealth quintiles, and current smokers. Socio-demographic, economic, and behavioral factors play important roles. These findings highlight the need for targeted mental health interventions. Priority should be given to high-risk groups to reduce the overall burden of anxiety among Nepali women.

Maternal mental health and infant and young child undernutrition: A systematic review and meta-analysis

DOI: <https://research.edgehill.ac.uk/en/publications/maternal-mental-health-and-infant-and-young-child-undernutrition--2/>

Context: Maternal mental health problems and child undernutrition are both major global public health challenges with potential bidirectional relationships. These issues are particularly pressing in low- and middle-income countries. The association between maternal mental health and child growth outcomes requires stronger evidence synthesis.

Methodology: A systematic review and meta-analysis searched multiple databases (1995–2025) including MEDLINE, PsycINFO, and Global Health Library, along with relevant organizational reports. Random-effects meta-analyses were conducted for primary and secondary outcomes. Risk of bias was assessed using recognized tools for observational studies.

Key message: Maternal depression and common mental disorders were significantly associated with increased risk of child stunting (aOR 1.41) and underweight. The association was strongest in children under 2 years in middle-income countries. Evidence supports integrated interventions addressing both maternal mental health and child nutrition. Such approaches could yield substantial benefits for early childhood development in resource-limited settings.

Mental Health Status and its Associated Factors among Students in Nawalparasi

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/craiaj.v9i1.96133>

Context: Mental health problems are very common among children and adolescents in Nepal and often contribute to school dropout. This can have long-term consequences on education and future opportunities. Understanding mental health status in school settings is crucial for timely intervention.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study of 387 high school students in Devchuli Municipality used the GHQ-12 questionnaire to measure psychiatric caseness. Probability cluster sampling technique was applied for participant selection. Logistic regression analysis identified factors significantly associated with poor mental health.

Key message: Prevalence of psychiatric caseness was 31.3%, linked to loneliness, insufficient sleep, school absenteeism, poor academic performance, and weak coping skills. One-third of students were affected, indicating a substantial burden. The findings emphasize the importance of school-based mental health support. Provision of social and psychological services could improve students' well-being and academic outcomes.

Burden of Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms among Nepalese Adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus

DOI: <https://he02.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/jph/article/view/281949>

Context: Lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) represent a significant additional burden for patients living with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. This co-occurrence can further impair quality of life and daily functioning. Assessing the burden in terms of quality-adjusted life years provides important insights for clinical care.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study across nine districts in Nepal assessed 480 diabetic patients for LUTS prevalence, quality of life (EQ-5D), QALYs, and associated clinical and behavioral factors. Data were collected from patients attending various health facilities during 2022–2023. Bivariate and correlation analyses were performed to explore relationships.

Key message: LUTS was highly prevalent, especially among females, and significantly reduced quality-adjusted life years when co-occurring with diabetes. Age, glycemic control, diabetes duration, and poor health behaviors correlated with higher burden. Routine screening for LUTS in diabetic patients is recommended. Improving social support and access to care could help reduce the overall burden among older adults with diabetes in Nepal.

Awareness of Liver Cancer among Adult Population of Selected Community of Gorkha District: A Cross-Sectional Study

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jobh.v2i1.94589>

Context: Liver cancer is a growing public health concern worldwide with increasing incidence and mortality rates. Awareness of risk factors and symptoms is essential for prevention and early detection. In Nepal, community-level knowledge regarding liver cancer remains limited.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in Ahale 8, Gorkha, involving 116 community members selected through non-probability purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured interview schedule and analyzed in SPSS version 22 with descriptive and inferential statistics. The study period was from 18 to 31 May 2025.

Key message: Awareness was poor in 86.3% of respondents, with significant associations to gender, income, and family history. The majority had limited knowledge of risk factors and symptoms. These results indicate an urgent need for targeted health education. Community awareness programs on prevention, screening, and early detection are essential to address the rising burden of liver cancer.

Prevalence and Associated Risk Factors of Chronic Kidney Disease among Individuals Attending a Screening Camp in Rupandehi District, Nepal: A Cross-Sectional Study

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jobh.v2i1.95797>

Context: Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is an emerging public health problem globally and is often detected at advanced stages due to lack of routine screening. Community-based screening camps can help estimate the true burden and associated risk factors. Early identification is crucial for effective prevention and management.

Methodology: A community-based cross-sectional study was conducted during a screening camp in Butwal, Rupandehi District, from 28th to 31st October 2025. A total of 947 participants of all ages were included, with data collected through structured questionnaires, anthropometric measurements, urine analysis, and serum creatinine for eGFR estimation. Chi-square tests were used to assess associations.

Key message: CKD prevalence reached 32.1%, significantly associated with older age, obesity, diabetes, hypertension treatment, and abnormal renal markers. The burden was notably high even in a screening setting. Community-based screening and early detection strategies are vital. These approaches can support prevention and control efforts for CKD across Nepal.

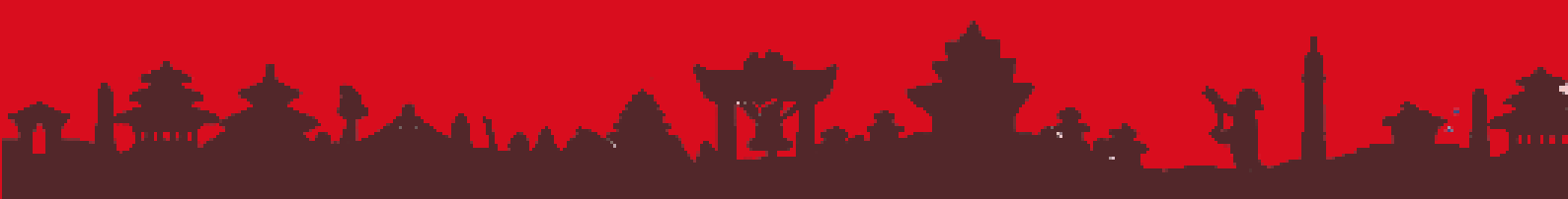
Prevalence of Menstrual Disorders and Their Association with Body Mass Index in Adolescent Nursing Students in Kathmandu, Nepal

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jcms.v22i2.91677>

Context: Menstrual disorders are common among adolescent girls and can negatively affect their physical health, psychological well-being, and academic performance. Body mass index (BMI) is one potential influencing factor, though evidence has been inconsistent. Understanding these issues is important for supporting adolescent health in educational settings.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out from October to November 2020 among 230 first- and second-year PCL nursing students in Kathmandu using cluster sampling. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires, with height and weight measured to calculate BMI according to WHO Asian criteria. Pearson's Chi-square test was used for analysis.

Key message: Dysmenorrhea was highly prevalent (76.1%), along with other disorders, while most students had normal BMI. No significant association was found between BMI and menstrual characteristics. The results highlight a substantial burden of menstrual issues. Menstrual health education and awareness programs should be strengthened in educational institutions to support adolescent girls' 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 June 2026.

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:

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NCD Watch Nepal



Publications



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