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Mapping the Evidence on Pain in Patients with Cancer in Nepal: A Scoping Review

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**Support** - No support.**Review Stage at time of this submission** - Completed but not published.**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY2026100076**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 16 October 2026 and was last updated on 16 October 2026.**INTRODUCTION**

Review question / Objective To map the published research that reports or examines pain in people with cancer in Nepal, including studies in which pain was one of several measured variables

Our research questions were: (1) Which cancer pain themes have been explored? (2) What are the characteristics of the studies (design, setting, publication source)? (3) Where are the gaps in the evidence?

Rationale Pain remains one of the significant symptoms in patients with cancer. Palliative care services, which play a central role in pain management, have expanded in recent years within Nepal. Similarly, the Nepalese Association of Palliative Care (NAPCare) has also published guidelines for pain management in palliative care in 2017, but adherence to such guidelines is reportedly poor. A 2019 scoping review by Sharma et. al. of clinical pain research in Nepal identified

only one study on cancer-related pain. That review addressed pain in general, did not use a search strategy targeted at cancer, and excluded studies in which pain was a symptom of another primary disease. Since then, further studies from Nepal have reported pain among patients with cancer, often as part of broader clinical profiles; as such, there is a need to identify pain-related research in patients with cancer.

Condition being studied The condition being studied includes "Pain in patients with cancer". Pain is one of the most common and burdensome symptoms associated with cancer. Pain may be a result of cancer itself or its therapy, such as systemic chemotherapy, surgery, radiation, targeted therapy, and diagnostic procedures. The World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines dealing with the pharmacological and radiotherapeutic management of cancer pain in adults and adolescents (2018) state that almost 55% of patients under anti-cancer treatment and about 66% of patients under advanced and end-

stage cancer conditions experience pain that is relieved by medicines.

METHODS

Search strategy Also grey literature and trial registers, and screening the reference lists of included articles. One example: (Cancer OR Oncology OR Neoplasm OR Malignan*) AND (Pain OR Analgesi* OR Opioid* OR Palliat*).

Participant or population Patients with cancer pain (including all reported cancer within the studies).

Intervention Not applicable.

Comparator Not applicable.

Study designs to be included Primary studies of any design published in English; systematic reviews, meta-analyses, opinion articles, case reports, study protocols, and studies in which pain was not reported.

Eligibility criteria Primary studies of any design published in English. Systematic reviews, meta-analyses, opinion articles, case reports, study protocols, and studies in which pain was not reported will be excluded.

Information sources MEDLINE, CENTRAL, Embase, APA PsycINFO, Scopus, Google Scholar, and Nepal Journals Online (NepJOL) from inception to April 2023.

Main outcome(s) Studies dealing with the Prevalence and characteristics of cancer pain; Assessment and measurement of cancer pain; Management approaches and interventions; Barriers to effective pain management; Palliative care and supportive services; Patient perspectives and experiences.

Additional outcome(s) Not applicable.

Data management Data will be charted for authorship, journal, year, study design, setting, cancer type, pain location and type, duration, intensity, funding, and conflicts of interest.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis Not applicable.

Strategy of data synthesis We will summarise the data as counts and percentages in Microsoft Excel 365 and describe them narratively. The data will.

Subgroup analysis Not applicable.

Sensitivity analysis Not applicable.

Language restriction Studies dealing with English language will only be included.

Country(ies) involved Nepal.

Other relevant information Not applicable

Keywords cancer; health policy; Nepal; pain; scoping review.

Dissemination plans The study will be published in a relevant journal to address the status of pain research in patients with cancer.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - Nabin Pathak - Drafted the manuscript, prepared the protocol, searched the databases, and analysed the data.

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