

Request for Expression of Interest

EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS FOR THE LUNG CANCER GUIDELINES: CONDUCTING SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS/META-ANALYSES

BACKGROUND:

1. A novel process has been instituted within the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to collaboratively formulate a comprehensive set of evidence-based guidelines for the country. This initiative will involve the concerted efforts of the Department of Health & Family Welfare (DoHFW), the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), and the Department of Health Research (DHR) using a rigorous and robust scientific process, ensuring the integration of the latest evidence.
2. The process of generating such evidence will entail the compilation of systematic reviews and meta-analyses from the existing literature, focusing on well-defined review questions. The evidence derived from these systematic reviews and meta-analyses will be systematically assessed for its strength utilizing the GRADE (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development, and Evaluation) Approach. This grading methodology will serve to evaluate the quality of evidence, which will subsequently inform the formulation of recommendations following the application of the Evidence to Decision (EtD) framework.
3. In light of this, expressions of interest (EoI) are invited from researchers who are interested in conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Prospective applicants will be tasked to conduct systematic reviews/meta-analysis pertaining to the identified review questions (PICOs) and assessing the quality of evidence using GRADE tool.

SCOPE OF WORK:

Lung cancer is one of the commonest cancers in India and its incidence is rising every year. It accounts for 10% of total cancer deaths in the country. Currently, evidence-based guidelines do not exist with respect to its prevention, screening, diagnosis, management and palliation of lung cancer in India.

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses play a crucial role in synthesizing existing evidence to inform decision-making in the management of lung cancer to guide clinical practice and improve patient outcomes.

Systematic review teams will be commissioned to conduct rigorous evaluations of the available literature on specific thirty review questions (PICO) identified by the Guideline Development Group of lung cancer guidelines.

ICMR invites researchers/academicians/scientists to express interest for conducting systematic reviews/meta-analysis for the generating evidence on questions on the below listed topics pertaining to lung cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, management and palliation. Below are the broad areas of review questions. Selected systematic review teams will receive detailed PICO for the question(s) assigned. Depending on the scope of the review, a team may be assigned more than one review question.

1. Prevention

- 1.1 Tobacco smoking
- 1.2 Air pollution

2. Screening

- 2.1 Low dose computed tomography
- 2.2 Chest radiograph

3. Diagnosis

- 3.1 Imaging
 - a. F-18/68 Gallium – Fibroblast Activation Protein inhibitors (FAPI)
 - b. 18-Fluoro-Deoxy Glucose-Positron Emission Tomography-Computed Tomography (18-FDG PET-CT)
 - c. Contrast Enhanced Computed Tomography (CECT) scan
 - d. Endobronchial Ultrasound and/or Endoscopic ultrasound (EBUS/EUS)
- 3.2 Pathological
- 3.3 Gene/molecular testing

4. Treatment

- 4.1 Chemotherapy
- 4.2 Immunotherapy
- 4.3 Radiotherapy
- 4.4 Surgery

5. Palliation

- 5.1 Early integration of palliative care
- 5.2 Management of dyspnoea
- 5.3 Management of symptom-cluster of depression, fatigue and insomnia

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- The proposal can be submitted through the [Google link](#) provided and are open to professionals, scientists (including ICMR), faculty who have regular employment in Medical Institutes/ Research Institutes/ Universities/ Colleges (documentary evidence of their recognition including DSIR certificate should be available).
- The Principal Investigator must have published at least 2 systematic reviews as first/corresponding author in PubMed indexed journals in relevant subject areas mentioned above (PMID of the articles must be mentioned).
- Applicants must demonstrate proficiency in utilizing systematic review methodologies, including conducting comprehensive literature searches, critically appraising study quality, synthesizing evidence, and applying appropriate statistical techniques for meta-analysis
- The team must include a minimum of one subject expert, methodologist/systematic review expert and statistician.
- Applicants must commit to adhering to ethical standards and best practices in research conduct, including transparency, objectivity, and integrity throughout the systematic review process

DELIVERABLES:

- Technical protocol for conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses, including a detailed description of search strategy, inclusion/exclusion criteria, data extraction sheet, plan for evidence quality (certainty) assessment using GRADE tool and statistical analysis for meta-analysis.
- Presentation of the review findings at the expert group meetings and participation in any pre-meetings or online webinarsto discuss methodology and preliminary results.
- Preparation of a GRADEpro summary of evidence profiles, providing comprehensive ratings of the certainty of evidence for each outcome assessed with clear explanations for each rating.
- Afile containing all studies included in the systematic reviews, including relevant study characteristics and extracted data
- Submission of a finalized report summarizing the systematic review process,key findings,and evidence profiles.
- Co-authored paper for publication

TIMELINES:

Total Duration for conducting systematic reviews & meta-analysis and grading the evidence - 03 months ***As this is a highly time sensitive issue, it is desirable that the commissioned review MUST be completed in stipulated time.***

APPLICATION PROCESS:

- Interested Researchers/ faculty having **required capability, experience and resources** to undertake the assignment should fill out the Google form at the below link and submit an Expression of Interest (EOI).
- The application received will go through a review process and the selected candidate will be notified on completion of the review process.

Submit the EoI through Google form link: <https://forms.gle/BWJg9yJnYeGWHSP67>

Last date for submission of EoI: 14th April 2024

BUDGET:

Financial Support upto Rs. 5 Lacs will be provided to all non-ICMR Institutes. (Contingency Rs. 4,50,000 for purchase of software for data management/Database access, conducting internal meetings, stationary, Honorarium and publication charges etc and Travel for attending ICMR-DHR workshop: Rs. 50,000).

ICMR institutes may take support from intramural funding.

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