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Alleviating the access abyss in palliative care and pain relief— an imperative of universal health coverage: the *Lancet* Commission report

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Executive Summary


The lack of global access to pain relief and palliative care throughout the life cycle constitutes a global crisis, and action to close this divide between rich and poor is a moral, health, and ethical imperative. The need for palliative care and pain relief has been largely ignored. Yet, palliative care and pain relief are essential elements of universal health coverage (UHC).

This *Lancet* Commission aims to (1) quantify the heavy burden of serious health-related suffering associated with a need for palliative care and pain relief; (2) identify and cost an essential package of palliative care and pain relief health services that would alleviate this burden; (3) measure the unmet need of an indispensable component of the package—off patent, oral, and injectable morphine; and (4) outline national and global health-systems strategies to expand access to palliative care and pain relief as an integral component of UHC while minimising the risk of diversion and non-medical use.



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Elisavinda K. ...