

## Key finding

# Lacking the ‘how’ and ‘how well’: Many chronic pain policies fail to include implementation and evaluation strategies – limiting real-world impact

**AIM:** To identify chronic pain policies and determine the extent of their implementation and whether their effectiveness has been evaluated.



## Methods



Scopus, Web of Science, Ovid (Embase and MEDLINE), and the grey literature between January 2000 – March 2024



Policies related to chronic pain management and delivery of care

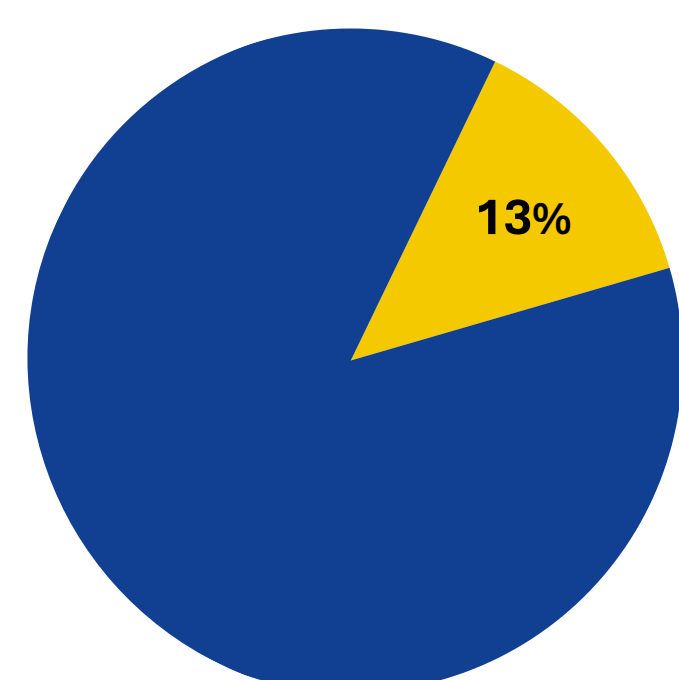


National and regional policy documents from the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand



## Key Findings

15 chronic pain policy documents identified



Proportion of policies with an implementation plan

Few policies include an implementation plan

Lack of actionable steps for real-world application

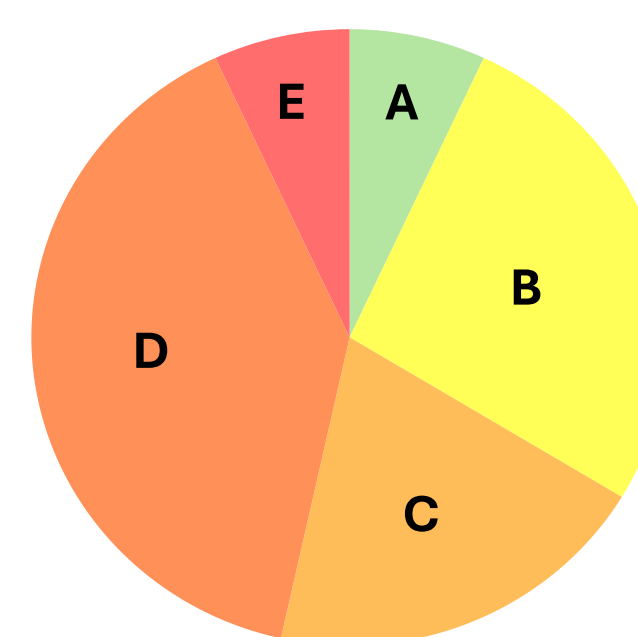
Leads to inconsistent and variable implementation



Variable implementation makes policy evaluation challenging. To address this, we developed a tool to assess the strength and quality of evidence on policy implementation.

Level (Quality of evidence)	Description
Grade A – High-Quality Evidence	Empirical data from large-scale evaluations, independent audits, or peer-reviewed studies, including measurable health outcomes, and uses rigorous evaluation methods
Grade B – Moderate-Quality Evidence	Documents and reports from reputable organisations (e.g. government agencies, charities), providing descriptive accounts of implementation with some supporting data such as surveys, stakeholder reports etc.
Grade C – Low-Quality Evidence	Mentions or general descriptions of policy implementation in publications, reports, or media, without formal evaluation, data, or rigorous methodology
Grade D – Insufficient Evidence	No available or verifiable evidence of implementation
Grade E – Withdrawn or Discontinued	Policy was introduced but later withdrawn or discontinued, with no available evidence or documentation to assess its implementation

Using this tool, we have determined that there is a lack of evidence on chronic pain policy implementation...



67% of the policies were graded as low quality or below

Many policies lacked sufficient data to support their effectiveness in practice

Without defined evaluation methods or data to measure outcomes, policy effectiveness cannot be determined

## Implications for future chronic pain policy



There is a need for evidence-based chronic pain policies that incorporate clear implementation plans, evaluation methods, and robust data collection to improve quality of care.