



Poster # 3

Title of poster: Assessing Quality of Life Measures for Elderly Traumatic Brain Injury Survivors: A Systematic Review

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Abstract :

Abstract

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) can be a devastating injury for an older adult. The elderly are more likely than younger adults to suffer emotional, physical and behavioural consequences and may require a longer period of time for recovery following a TBI. Much of what is currently known about recovery for older adults is based on information provided by family or clinician ratings. More recently, researchers and clinicians working in the field of rehabilitation acknowledge that a patient's subjective perspective of their problems and the degree to which they are bothered by them is a critical indicator of outcome following TBI. Gathering information on the breadth and scope of the patient's Quality of Life (QoL) is crucial information for clinicians caring for the elder as well as researchers seeking to quantify the true burden of TBI and may help to determine/predict outcome after a TBI.

There is no current synthesis of the evidence on QoL measures used with TBI patients. As such, clinicians and researchers may be unclear as to which QoL tools are best suited for this vulnerable population. Implementing standardized QoL measurements will help facilitate comparison within a clinical practice and care for a single TBI survivor, as well as facilitate comparison across multiple survivors in research studies.

Objective: This review assesses the scope, characteristics, methods of administration, dimensions of measurement and use in different types of TBI severity of QoL instruments used with older adults surviving TBI.

Participants: Studies reviewed must have evidence of including patients at least 65 years or older with a TBI.

Methods: We systematically reviewed six databases and extracted QoL instruments that were used to assess elderly survivors of TBI.

Results: The initial search yielded 3145 abstracts. After removal of duplicates, title and abstract review and full text screening, 73 articles were included for review. We uncovered a total of 27 multi-dimensional QoL tools that have been used with elder TBI survivors.

Conclusions : We found five promising measures (based on frequency and currency of use) to consider for a measurement tool to evaluate of an elder's perspective on QoL after TBI. The tools include the generic measure of SF-36, (also the short version SF-12), the EQ-5D, the WHO-QoL (also the short version WHO-QoL BREF), the Sickness Impact Profile, as well as the TBI specific measure of QOLIBRI.

There is limited literature that assesses QoL specifically for elderly survivors of TBI. As elderly individuals may have unique needs as compared to younger populations with regards to QoL following TBI, future research should be conducted to evaluate current measures and/or develop future measures that may be specifically targeted to the aged.

