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The Value of Adding Quality of Life Measures to Assessments of Outcomes in Mental Health

Abstract:

Objectives: In the domain of mental health outcomes, increasing interest has been shown in complementing traditional symptom measures with measures of a patient’s quality of life. The present study aimed to evaluate the value of including the Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Questionnaire (Q-LES-Q; Endicott, Nee, Harrison, & Blumenthal, 1993) into the routine assessment battery used at a private psychiatric hospital.

Method: The sample consisted of 1276 consecutive inpatients treated at a private psychiatric hospital over a two year period. Admission and discharge data were collected for the Q-LES-Q, the mental health subscales of the Medical Outcomes Short Form Questionnaire (SF-36), the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale, and the Health of the Nation Outcome Scale.

Results: Patient improvements from admission to discharge were seen across all instruments, including the Q-LES-Q. The Q-LES-Q was correlated with existing symptom measures, and regression analyses revealed predictive relationships between length of stay and quality of life even after symptoms of depression and anxiety were taken into account.

Conclusions: Although the Q-LES-Q was correlated with symptom measures already in use, it added to the ability to predict patient length of stay, and showed some divergence from measures of clinical outcomes. This pattern was seen despite intentionally restricting the sample to patients with mood and affective disorder diagnoses. Discussion will focus on the value of considering quality of life in a comprehensive assessment of health outcomes.