

Poster presentation

Pediatric patients and their quality of life

Alexandra Michopoulou*, Angeliki Nikolaou, Vasiliki Goula, Athina Iliadou, Kalliopi Voikli, Dimitrios Giannios, Georgios Stefanou and Stavroula-Maria Papatheodorou

Address: Penteli's Children Hospital, Greece

* Corresponding author

from International Society on Brain and Behaviour: 2nd International Congress on Brain and Behaviour
Thessaloniki, Greece. 17–20 November 2005

Published: 28 February 2006

Annals of General Psychiatry 2006, **5**(Suppl 1):S215 doi:10.1186/1744-859X-5-S1-S215

Background

This study aims to compare quality of life between healthy and ill children (distinction between chronic and non-chronic illness). Five domains of quality of life were evaluated: somatic, psychological, social, family and school life. Hypothesis was that healthy children had better quality of life than the other two groups of ill children and especially hospitalized and chronically ill children.

Materials and methods

The sample consisted of 201 children, aged 6 to 14 years old. 53,5% were boys and 46,5% were girls. The children were categorized into three target groups: a) control group (95 children), b) outpatient group (74 children) and c) inpatient group (32 children). 54 children of the total sample had a chronic disease. Actually, the ill children consulted the following departments: 6,7% Dermatology, 37,5% Psychology and Development departments, 7,7% Endocrinology, 12,5% Allergiology, 25% Pediatric and 10,6% Surgery department. Children were given a questionnaire of quality of life constructed by our Department, based on Kid-KINDL questionnaire for children, translated and standardized by Vidalis A and Vidali LE.

Results

Hypothesis was confirmed that the control group had a better quality of life than the ill children (outpatient and inpatient group). Especially, the somatic and school life domains were affected more negatively for the hospitalized children. The chronicity of the disease is an important factor for the aggravation of the children's difficulties and especially of their school life. It also affects their self-concept. The sex of the child was proved to be an important factor. Girls were generally more affected, especially

(statistically significant results) on the somatic and psycho-emotional domain. The age group, to which the children belonged, was also important for their school life (school difficulties, concentration, school performance). Adolescents were found to present lower self-esteem than the children, so that their contact with friends was less frequent.

Discussion

Hospitalization is experienced as a traumatic period of the children's life, so that their main wish is to be healthy and capable of physical activities. The long duration of the illness makes them believe that they are different and inferior than the other children. As a result, feelings of fear and aggressiveness appear, so that the contact with other children becomes difficult. As a consequence of this lack of contact, children choose friends and relationships as the most important factors for a better quality of life.

References

1. Eiser C, Morse R: **A review of measures of quality of life for children with chronic illness.** *Archives of disease in childhood* 2001, **84**:205-211.
2. Ravens-Sieberer U, Bullinger M: **Assessing health-related quality of life in chronically ill children with the German KINDL: first psychometric and content analytical results.** *Quality of life* 1998, **7**:399-407.
3. Eiser C: **Children's quality of life measures.** *Archives of disease in childhood* 1997, **37**:359-354.