

Oral presentation

Quality of life and continuity of life of people living with psychosis

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Over the years, the widely used concept of Quality of Life has got associated with many different meanings and thus became less useful in psychiatric research and clinical practice. In an attempt to find a measurement that is more appropriate for people living with psychosis, we have developed a novel concept entitled "Continuity of Life", which can be defined as "the degree to which an event or process (such as mental illness) has interrupted the continuity of life of an individual person's life with regard to his/her activities, hopes and plans. The Continuity of Life concept focuses on the present state as well as on future expectations of the individual and covers the following life domains: personal mental and physical health; access to material possessions and earnings; relationships with family members and friends; work, studies, professional career; leisure and recreation; civic duties and responsibilities; and personal beliefs and/or religious faith. With this definition in mind, we have subsequently developed a Continuity of life Interview – a semistructured instrument that is particularly sensitive to events such as admission to psychiatric hospital for a serious mental illness including schizophrenia, or the presence of obvious disability due to any cause. Psychometric properties of this instrument were evaluated in a psychiatric rehabilitation setting and the results demonstrated its appropriateness in assessing an individual's perception of psychotic illness-related disruption of relevant life areas and global life quality across the above-mentioned domains.