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| Title | Outcome Measurement in Major Depression |
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Aim

To identify outcomes measurement instruments to use to track the progress and treatment of patients with major depression.

Conclusions and results

This review identified 15 instruments (10 depression-specific, 5 generic) that were either developed or used for outcomes measurement in major depression. These included the Depression Outcomes Module (DOM), Zung Self Rating Depression Scale (Zung SDS), Short Form-36 item (SF-36), Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (HAM-D), the Global Assessment of Function (GAF), Sheehan Disability Scale (SDS), and the Quality of Well Being Self-Administered (QWB-SA). The DOM, QWB-SA, and SF-36 meet all criteria for assessment. The Zung SDS and the HAM-D meet all criteria except assessment of functioning. All but the DOM assess symptom severity only. The QWB-SA and SF-36 may not be valid in a severely ill patient population. The SDS measures functional disability and meets half of the criteria. Other instruments that fully or closely meet the criteria for VHA use were the Quality of Life in Depression Scale and the PHQ-9. These instruments are being evaluated to determine the most suitable instrument to use for the progress and treatment of patients with major depression.

Recommendations

Managers at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have a variety of constructs and instruments from which to choose those most suitable to their outcome measurement needs and preferences for depression care. There is a need for consensus on preferred approaches for use in VA.

Methods

A qualitative systematic review of the literature was undertaken. Comprehensive searches were carried out in the following psychological and biomedical databases; MEDLINE, HealthSTAR, PsycINFO, Current

Contents, EMBASE, the Cochrane Library, and the extensive local monograph collections of McLean Psychiatric Hospital and the Countway Library of Medicine from 1976 to 2001. Use of a comprehensive array of bibliographic search strategy terms and free-text words retrieved over 1400 references, including end references, along with several highly useful books on mental health instruments and outcome evaluation. Articles that described or analyzed instruments used in treating and monitoring patients with major depression were included. A list of instrument selection criteria that are relevant to VA mental health services was applied.

Further research/reviews required

Additional research is needed to determine the outcomes measurement instrument(s) best suited for major depression.