



Title	Outcomes Measurement in Schizophrenia – No 2 in a Series on Outcomes Measurement in VHA Mental Health Services
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Aim

To identify outcome measurement instruments to use in tracking the progress and treatment of patients with schizophrenia.

Conclusions and results

The review identified 13 instruments that were either developed or used to measure outcomes in schizophrenia. These included the Schizophrenia Outcomes Module (SCHIZOM), the Role Functioning Scale (RFS), and the Quality of Well Being (QWB) self-administered scale. These instruments most closely align with the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) criteria for outcomes measurement. However, while the interviewer-administered version of the QWB has been tested and found to be acceptable in patients with schizophrenia, the self-administered version has not been tested or used in this patient population. The length and complexity of SCHIZOM argue against its use for routine collection of outcomes data. Other instruments that fully or closely meet the criteria for VHA use are the Lehman Quality of Life Interview, Heinrich-Hanlon-Carpenter Quality of Life Scale, Quality of Well Being scale, and the Life Skills Profile (LSP). The LSP was developed specifically for use in schizophrenia. These instruments are being evaluated to determine the most suitable instrument to follow the progress and treatment of patients with schizophrenia in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Recommendations

Additional information is needed to select one specific instrument for outcomes measurement in schizophrenia. However, the instruments currently accepted for schizophrenia are the Quality of Well Being Interviewer-Administered, Lehman Quality of Life Interview, Heinrich-Hanlon-Carpenter Quality of Life Scale, and the Life Skills Profile. 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 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 schizophrenia 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 schizophrenia care.