

OPTIMISING QUALITY OF LIFE –THE FOURTH 90%: HOW TO INCLUDE QUALITY OF LIFE IN GUIDELINES

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Background:

Australia's National HIV Strategy includes not only increasing the proportion of people living with HIV (PLHIV) with undetectable viral load, but also improving quality of life (QoL) of PLHIV.

The interrelationship between quality of life, stigma and treatment adherence has been well established. Low quality of life and stigma can hinder treatment adherence, and suppressed viral load does not always result in improved quality of life. However QoL is a complex concept. In order to be effective in fostering this goal, HIV community and healthcare services need a valid, short and practical way to monitor and respond to QoL among PLHIV accessing their programs.

Methods:

This paper will draw on results and experiences of:

- HIV Futures 8 - a survey on the health and wellbeing of 895 PLHIV in Australia;
- Review of emerging literature on incorporating indicators of quality of life into the ongoing clinical care for PLHIV;
- PozQoL partnership study to develop a short scale to monitor quality of life in community and clinical practice; and
- Consultation with clinical, community and policy sectors on the incorporation of QoL monitoring into day-to-day practice.

Results:

QoL is being increasingly identified globally as an integral part of achieving and sustaining optimised care and reaching national and global goals in HIV. PozQoL was successful in developing a short scale to measure health related quality of life (HRQoL) and validated with 461 PLHIV against other longer scales on QoL for PLHIV. We also identified insights into the key components for PLHIV such as concerns about future health, the social impact of stigma, and fatigue of managing HIV at a broader level. PozQoL will soon commence an implementation trial across participating health, clinical, and community services.

Conclusion:

Indicators of health related QoL are both an input and an outcome of optimising care. Incorporating a meaningful quality of life perspective in guidelines for optimising care will be essential to achieving sustained outcomes for PLHIV in a rapidly changing context.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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