

Quality assessment of patient-reported outcome measures for patients with multiple ear complaints

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Abstract

Introduction: There is an increased demand for well-validated PROMs in otology. This study will systematically assess the methodological quality of all published patient-reported outcome measures (PROMS) for patients with multiple ear complaints and to identify the best suitable PROM for use by clinicians treating patients with multiple ear complaints. **Methods:** An extensive systematic mapping review on all otology questionnaires was performed to identify questionnaires measuring multiple ear complaints. The ‘Consensus-based standards for the selection of health measurement Instruments’ (COSMIN) checklists were used to evaluate the quality of the questionnaire by two researchers. The worst item score per aspect of the methodological assessment counted. **Results:** Twelve multiple complaint questionnaires were included in the study for quality assessment. Ten questionnaires were disease specific (COMQ-12, CES, ZCMEI-21, MD-POSI, PAN-QOL, ETDQ-7, MDOQ, GYSSCDQ, COMOT-15 and DEU-MDDS). Two questionnaires were ear domain specific (OQUA and COQOL). The majority of multiple complaint questionnaires lacked good design with concept elicitation and patient involvement. **Conclusion:** For the majority of questionnaires, the quality assessment was inadequate as only a few authors consulted with patients affected by the complaints in the development. Modifications of earlier versions of PROMS or combinations of multiple questionnaires lead to ongoing (cross-cultural) validation of these questionnaires albeit the mediocre design and validation. The two domain specific questionnaires are the COQOL and OQUA, both with adequate quality but different focus. COOQL to quantify the quality of life and OQUA to measure and evaluate severity and impact of ear complaints.

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