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## **The development of a searchable database (HaNDLE-on-QoL) on quality of life in head and neck cancer.**

**R Wotherspoon, M Davies, A Kanatas and SN Rogers**

### **Abstract**

High quality cancer care aims to improve a range of patient outcomes, including survival and health related quality of life (HRQOL), representing the patient's physical, psychological, and social response to the disease and therapy (WHOQOL, 1998). It includes measures of physical symptoms (pain, fatigue, vomiting), physical functioning (e.g. mobility, self-care), emotional functioning (anxiety, depression, stress) and social and family functioning. It is a patient-subjective measure capturing important information that cannot be achieved by traditional objective measures, such as tumour response or survival.

Over the last three decades, HRQOL has become a significant outcome measure for cancer patients in clinical trials. In this setting, patient-reported HRQOL data is commonly required alongside biomedical outcomes such as progression-free survival, and overall survival to assess the value of a given therapeutic intervention. Patient-reported HRQOL has also been found to predict treatment response and survival in a number of advanced solid cancers (Efficace et al, 2006). More recently, PROMs are increasingly being used by the National Health Service (NHS) as quality indicators when assessing service delivery and treatment outcomes (incl. health economic outcomes) (DoH, 2007).

The published work includes a plethora of questionnaires. The aim of this work was to develop a searchable database -that could be use as a guide for clinicians and researchers- specific to head and neck cancer.

### **What is HaNDLE-on-QoL?**

HaNDLE-on-QoL is a unique online searchable database of all papers published from 1982 to present on quality of life in head and neck cancer that have used questionnaires.

Questionnaires are the main source of quality of life data. Currently HaNDLE-on-QoL has 800 papers and a list of 200 different questionnaires.

HaNDLE-on-QoL is a point of reference where by users can search the database by i.year of publication, ii.first author, iii.title of paper, iv.reference, v.abstract, vi. subsite of H&N cohort, vii.study design, viii.theme, ix.main issue and x.questionnaires

HaNDLE-on-QoL is updatable and will include new papers as they become available. Those using the database are will be asked to contact the lead author to highlight any papers omitted or errors on the dataset.

### **Concussions**

HaNDLE-on-QoL will be a tremendous educational resource for the healthcare professionals working in head and neck cancer.

HaNDLE-on-QoL saves precious time for busy staff in searching for the HRQOL studies so that they can stay up to date more efficiently. It allows a functional dataset that can be interrogated by member of the clinical and research fraternity.

HaNDLE-on-QoL helps staff build skills and knowledge of HRQOL outcomes, so that they can be better informed though the evidence based when providing healthcare, undertaking audits/service evaluations and designing trials.

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