



Effect of Aphasia on Health Related Quality of Life of Patients with Stroke - Preliminary Study Findings

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Abstract

Health Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) reflects the impact of a health state on a person's ability to lead a fulfilling life. One of the main consequences of stroke is aphasia, which can affect HRQOL of patients significantly. It has been shown that 21-38% of patients with stroke suffered from aphasia. Assessment of HRQOL is particularly important to evaluate the rehabilitation interventions for patients with long term disabilities. This study was conducted to compare the HRQOL between stroke patients with and without aphasia, in order to determine the effect of aphasia on quality of life of patients with stroke. A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted involving 61 patients with stroke (3 months after hospital discharge) in neurology clinics and medical clinics in Teaching Hospital, Karapitiya. Mississippi Aphasia Screening Test (MAST)-Sinhala version was used to screen patients in order to detect aphasia. HRQOL were evaluated using the proxy version of Stroke Aphasia Quality of Life generic (SAQOL-39g- Sinhala) scale. The mean age of the patients with stroke was 65.26 (SD \pm 12.83, range 33-81), of which 67.2% (n=41) were males. 83.6% (n=51) of them having ischemic strokes and 39.3% (n=24) having aphasia. Patients without aphasia obtained higher overall HRQOL scores (M=3.94, SE=0.114) than patients with aphasia (M=2.65, SE=0.144). This difference was significant $t(59) = (-7.06)$, $p < 0.05$. The mean scores for all three domains (communication, psychosocial and physical domains) were significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) in patients with aphasia (2.26, 2.80, 2.68) than in patients without aphasia (4.40, 3.85, 3.79). HRQOL is significantly poor in patients with aphasia affecting all three domains when compared with patients without aphasia following stroke. This need to be taken into account when planning for rehabilitation.

Key words: Aphasia, quality of life, SAQOL, stroke

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