

PozQoL - a short quality of life measure for people living with HIV

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Why a new QoL scale?

Advances in HIV medical treatment are driving major changes in HIV policy and practice, including the encouragement of uptake and maintenance of antiretroviral treatment by PLHIV for both personal and public health benefits. However, achieving these goals requires a concurrent focus on the broader quality of life (QoL) of PLHIV, including psychological and social wellbeing.

HIV community, support and healthcare services need a valid, short and practical way to evaluate and compare the impact of their programs. To meet this need, the PozQoL study aimed to develop, test and validate a short and freely available scale assessing the health related QoL among PLHIV that could be easily incorporated into the day-to-day practice of health and community services as well as other community led social research.

Development of PozQoL

The PozQoL scale was developed in four stages: review of the existing literature, conceptualisation, item development, and validation. The insights from consultations with PLHIV and other stakeholders supported the balancing of statistical rigour and conceptual accuracy.

Validation Study

The scale was validated in an online survey with $N = 465$ adult Australians living with HIV. Participants were recruited through social media and various community organisations nationwide. The survey included the pilot PozQoL scale (64 items pretested for face and content validity) and other validated measures of health and wellbeing.

PozQoL 13 items

Thirteen items comprising the final scale were selected based on Exploratory Factor Analysis and conceptual considerations.



Health Concerns

- I worry about my health
- I worry about the impact of HIV on my health
- I fear the health effects of HIV as I get older

Psychological

- I am enjoying life
- I feel in control of my life
- I am optimistic about my future
- I feel good about myself as a person

Social

- I feel that HIV limits my personal relationships
- I lack a sense of belonging with people around me
- I am afraid that people might reject me when they learn I have HIV

Functional

- I feel that HIV prevents me from doing as much as I would like
- Having HIV limits my opportunities in life
- Managing HIV wears me out

Response scale: 1 – not at all; 2 – slightly; 3 – moderately; 4 – very; 5 - extremely

Conclusions

The PozQoL scale has been tested in a diverse sample of adult PLHIV living in Australia, demonstrating very good reliability and validity. The scale is currently being field-tested by several community, support and healthcare services for PLHIV in Australia and is considered for a national indicator of QoL in Australia's National HIV Strategy. PozQoL has been also implemented in a national study in the US (in English and in Spanish).

Further details

For more information about PozQoL, please take a copy of our broadsheet or contact Dr Gosia Mikołajczak m.mikolajczak@latrobe.edu.au



PozQoL has been developed by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health, and Society in partnership with ViiV Healthcare Australia, National Association of People with HIV Australia, Living Positive Victoria, Positive Life NSW and Queensland Positive People.