

World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL-BREF)



The WHOQOL-BREF is a general assessment of an adult's quality of life and focuses on four main domains: (1) Physical health; (2) psychological; (3) social relationships; and (4) environment. In addition, the WHOQOL-BREF contains two questions that result in scores for general quality of life and general health. We report results for all domains. Higher scores indicate worse quality of life for the specific domain. The score is compared with the population from a large validation study.²

We included the WHOQOL-BREF in MyFampal Parent because we believe it helps to sum up all of the ups and downs within the family, and personally, in a single questionnaire.

We recommend you complete the WHOQOL-BREF every 6 months.

Focus

At the time the WHOQOL-BREF was developed, quality of life was defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as, 'individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns'.

The WHOQOL user manual describes quality of life as a broad ranging concept incorporating the persons' physical health, psychological state, level of independence, so-

At a glance

The World Health Organization Quality of Life Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF) is an adult quality of life questionnaire that has been tested in many different cultures. It can help provide a baseline measure of quality of life for an adult and evaluate changes in quality of life over time.

Found in

MyFampal Parent

Source

WHOQOL Study Group, World Health Organization (1998)¹

Abbreviation

WHOQOL-BREF

Category

Know yourself

For adults

Answered by adult

Structure & Focus

26 questions

General quality of life, general health, physical health, psychological, social relationships, environmental.

Frequency

Every 6 months

Credibility

★★★★★



cial relationships, personal beliefs and their relationships to relevant features of the environment.³ This definition reflects the view that quality of life refers to a subjective evaluation, which is embedded in a cultural, social and environmental context. Because the WHOQOL-BREF focuses upon respondents' perceived quality of life, it is not expected to provide a means of measuring in any detailed manner symptoms, diseases, conditions, or disability, but rather the perceived effects of circumstances on the individual's quality of life.

General quality of life

The WHOQOL-BREF rates adult's self-perception of their general quality of life with a single question. The resulting response is compared with a distribution of responses.

General Health

Self-perceived general health is also rated with a single question and compared in the same manner.

Physical Health

The physical health domain evaluates an individual's self-perceived physical health. The physical domain comprises pain and discomfort, energy and fatigue, and sleep and rest.

Psychological

The psychological domain examines the effect of certain psychological factors on an individual's quality of life. It covers positive feelings of contentment, negative feelings, views on thinking and learning, self-esteem, and body image.

Social Relationships

This domain addresses personal relationships, social support and sexual activity and their self-perceived impact on an individual's quality of life.

Environment

The environment domain is broader in scope than the previous three and addresses elements such as physical safety and security, the home, financial security, availability and quality of health and social care, opportunity for leisure activities, access to adequate transport, and access to information.





Strengths and limitations

Pros:

- Simple to complete and validated for multi-cultural comparison in many languages
- Domains provide useful insights
- Differentiates between healthy and sick respondents well
- Encompasses a broad definition of quality of life beyond health related quality of life

Cons:

- The WHOQOL-BREF does not estimate a single quality of life 'score'
- Has no threshold of higher risk, so results reported in the dials show how unusual the result is, not how risky

Comparator information

The result for an individual adult is compared with results from UK and US respondents within a study conducted in 11,830 adults from 23 countries (published in 2004).² As we collect more information from WHOQOL-BREF from our MyFampal families, we will improve these comparisons by enabling more specificity (e.g., females living in the US aged between 45 and 54 years). The WHOQOL-BREF individual results are presented on a dial, however, the 'at risk' and 'some risk' zones denote unusual quality of life scores and should not be used to infer any clinical meaning.

References

1 WHOQOL-BREF: introduction, administration, scoring and generic version of the assessment: field trial version, December 1996. 1996. <http://www.who.int/iris/handle/10665/63529> (accessed Sept 25, 2015).

2 Skevington SM, Lotfy M, O'Connell KA. The World Health Organization's WHOQOL-BREF quality of life assessment: Psychometric properties and results of the international field trial. A Report from the WHOQOL Group. *Qual Life Res* 2004; **13**: 299–310.

3 WHOQOL User Manual. World Health Organization, 1998.

For more information

www.myfampal.com

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