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Research Article

Evidence of quality of life for hospitalised patients with COVID-19: a scoping review

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Plain language summary

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Quality of life can be measured using short, simple surveys. It is important to assess quality of life in this way, as it can show how health conditions affect people. Quality-of-life surveys can also be used to measure how treatments benefit people and to judge whether it is cost-effective to fund them. COVID-19 is a new disease, with new treatments developed to treat it. COVID-19 also created possible barriers to collecting quality-of-life survey data, especially from people in hospital at the start of the pandemic.

This paper reviews studies which report data on quality of life for people hospitalised with COVID-19, especially how much evidence is available and how the studies were carried out.

There were 35 studies included in the review. Of these, 13 assessed how cost-effective treatments for COVID-19 were. None of them collected survey responses directly from patients. Instead, they used data previously collected from people with other conditions such as influenza to represent people with COVID-19's quality of life. The studies which did collect data from patients used a wide variety of different surveys, which made comparing their results difficult. Mental health-related surveys were used by 12 studies, and a further 12 used sleep-related surveys. Relatively few studies used general surveys which could assess the overall effect of COVID-19 on people's quality of life.

In future health crises, we recommend using more general quality-of-life measures. We also recommend that researchers co-ordinate to reduce the number of different surveys they use, as this will make comparing results easier.