

ABSTRACT

Responding to the Patient's Voice: the importance of Patient Reported Outcomes.

The experience of health and illness, and the outcomes of healthcare desired by patients are multifaceted and often uniquely individual. Challenges to including the patient's voice in healthcare assessment include identifying patient important outcomes and the most credible methods of assessment. Patient reported outcomes are direct reports from patients about how they function or feel in relation to a health condition or its treatment – without interpretation by others. Well-developed patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) provide a structured and systematic assessment of the impact of ill-health and treatment effects from the patient's perspective.

When the primary goal of treatment is to improve how a patient feels, measurement of the patient perspective is imperative. However, for the data from PROMs to be meaningful there must be evidence that the PROM includes aspects of life valued by patients: how were patients involved in PROM development? Moreover, the data must be reliable and valid.

Discrepancies between patient reported outcomes and outcomes assessed in clinical trials, and the quality of numerous PROMs, highlights the irrefutable need to embrace new ways of involving patients in PROMs-related research. It is incumbent upon health professionals, researchers and patients, to embrace new ways of actively involving patients in the identification and appropriate measurement of patient reported outcomes.