

Quality of Life and Self-Assessed Health of Buprenorphine-Maintained Opiate Addicts

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Abstract : Introduction: Addiction is a chronic brain relapsing disorder. Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) using buprenorphine as a medical treatment option shows as a promising option for achieving and maintaining abstinence in opioid-addicted patients. This research aimed to determine and evaluate the quality of life (QoL) in opiate-addicted patients after five years of buprenorphine therapy. Method: The total sample included 44 buprenorphine-maintained opiate addicts in outpatient treatment. The participants were administered the QoL questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF) at two-time points (T1 and T2) with an interval of at least five years. WHOQOL-BREF contains a total of 26 questions. The first two questions, related to overall QoL and general health status, and the remaining questions (3-26), which represented four domains—physical, psychological, social, and environmental health—were evaluated separately. Results: The results indicated no significant differences in overall self-assessed QoL nor in individual domains after five years (T2) of abstinence with OST buprenorphine- maintenance. Conclusion: These findings indicated no improvement in QoL of buprenorphine-maintenance opiate addicts in outpatient treatment. However, this might be due to the smaller sample size and participants' overall high scores in QoL at T1. This study suggests the importance of expectations when considering the QoL and general health of buprenorphine-maintenance opiate addicts in outpatient treatment.

Keywords : abstinence, addicts, buprenorphine, opioid substitution therapy, quality of life

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