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Quality of life among patients with a brain tumor and their carers

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Abstract

Objective

This study assessed the quality of life and psychosocial well-being of brain tumor patients and their carers.

Methods

A cross-sectional postal survey was completed by 75 patients and 70 carers (response rate=29.8%) who were listed in a community-based brain tumor support group database. Measures used were the Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-General (FACT-G) and the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS). Queensland population-based norms for the FACT-G were used for comparison.

Results

On average, as compared with population norms, the FACT-G summary scores of the patients (mean=74.6, S.D.=18.6) and carers (mean=76.7, S.D.=17.7) were between 0.5 and 1 S.D. lower, representing a clinically significant reduction in their quality of life. Among patients and carers, 30% and 40%, respectively, reported anxious moods and 17% and 10%, respectively, reported depressed moods on the HADS. Significant correlations were observed between the FACT-G and HADS subscales, particularly emotional well-being and anxiety, as well as physical and functional well-being and depression, and between patients' and their carers' quality of life. Among the patients, predictors of lower quality of life were older age and female sex, whereas for the carers, there was a trend for lower quality of life among those looking after a patient with a high-grade disease.

Conclusions

The degree of detriment to quality of life by a brain tumor for patients and that for their carers are similar and clinically significant. The association between the FACT-G subscales and the HADS indicates that improvements could be achieved by alleviating emotional distress and improving functional well-being.

Keywords: [Anxiety](#), [Brain tumors](#), [Carers](#), [Depression](#), [Patients](#), [Quality of life](#)

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