

Quality of Life and Functioning Among Community-based Individuals of Schizophrenia in Hong Kong

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I**ntroduction:** Quality of life (QOL) has gained importance as an outcome measure for people with schizophrenia living in the community following deinstitutionalization.

Purposes of the project: The objectives of the current study were: (1) to compare the quality of life and clinical characteristics among community-based individuals with schizophrenia under different residential statuses and (2) to examine the significance of clinical characteristics on QOL.

Material & methods: In this study, 201 community-based individuals with schizophrenia were recruited from five different types of residential status comprising long stay care home, halfway house, supported hostel/housing, living with family, and living alone. Clinical characteristics including cognitive abilities, symptom levels, and community/social functioning were assessed by the Allen Cognitive Level Screen, the Scales for the Assessment of Negative Symptoms and Positive Symptoms, and the Chinese version of the Multnomah Community Ability Scale respectively. The outcome measure of QOL was measured by the Chinese version of the WHO Quality of Life Measure.

Results: Analysis of covariance showed significant differences in community/social functioning, cognitive abilities, and negative symptoms; but not in QOL under different types of residential status. Further simultaneous multiple regressions found out that community/social functioning was the significant predictor of QOL.

Conclusion: Results showed that objective living condition per se did not much influence QOL; but community/social functioning was over and above other clinical characteristics by exerting significant effect on QOL. Yet caution should be noted in making the conclusion with the residential status of long stay care home, as it provides a protective element for the perseverance of QOL. For those individuals living with family or living alone, family support or autonomy may mediate between functioning and QOL. Implications can be drawn for different modes of service delivery or enhancement with the ultimate aim of promoting quality of life.

