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The Role of Non-cognitive Factors in the Ratings of People with Dementia and Caregivers' Quality of Life

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Objectives: This study aimed to 1) determine changes over time in PwD and caregiver ratings of PwD QoL 2) to identify the factors associated with any changes in QoLratings and 3) to identify any discrepancies between PwD and caregiver ratings of PwD QoL.

Methods: Using a longitudinal design, we investigated QoL of 69 people with mild Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. We examined the influence of awareness of disease, cognitive status, mood, functionality, neuropsychiatric symptoms and burden. Univariate and multivariate regression analyses were conducted to examine the contribution of the various co-factors.

Results: At baseline, we observed that caregivers's QoL was associated to PwD QoL ($t= 3.557$, $p< 0.001$) and mood ($t = -3.673$, $p < 0.001$). PwD QoL was associated to caregivers's QoL ($t= 5.087$, $p<0.001$). After one year, caregiver's QoL was associated to awareness of disease ($t=-2.196$, $p< 0.05$) and PwD mood ($t=-2.242$, $p< 0.05$) and QoL ($t=3.696$, $p<0.001$). PwD QoL was associated to caregivers' QoL ($t=4.596$, $p<0.001$).

Conclusions: In mild dementia, the cognitive impairment and functionality were not the primary factors that accounted in PwD and family caregivers' ratings of QoL. Our findings suggested that there was an association between PwD and caregivers' QoL over time. In addition, non-cognitive factors, such as awareness of disease and mood played an important role in PwD and caregivers' QoL ratings.

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