

## P03-103

### PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND ACTIVE AGEING: MAINTAINING QUALITY OF LIFE IN OLDER AGE

T. McFarquhar, A. Bowling

*Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health, University College London, London, UK*

**Aims:** To investigate the relationship between psychological well-being and measures of active ageing in a British sample of older people. Active ageing is the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security to embrace quality of life as people age.

**Methods:** A national survey of quality of life and psychological well-being including 999 people aged  $\geq 65$  years living in private households in Britain commenced in 1999. In the most recent follow up of 2007, 323 survivors aged  $\geq 72$  years completed a postal survey regarding their quality of life and specifically the process of active ageing. A subset of 42 participants was also interviewed qualitatively in 2008 about their perceptions of active ageing. Psychological well-being at baseline was measured using the 12 item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ12) and correlated with measures of active ageing at baseline and in subsequent follow ups. Measures of active ageing included number and frequency of leisure and social activities, physical ability and access to support networks.

**Results:** A significant positive relationship between psychological well being and measures of active ageing was found at baseline ( $p < 0.05$ ). Measure of active ageing in 2007 were also correlated with psychological well-being at baseline ( $p < 0.05$ ). Qualitative interviews in 2008 provided additional insights into this relationship.

**Conclusions:** Results suggesting a strong relationship between psychological health and ageing actively. Good psychological health may allow the elderly to maintain an active and fulfilling lifestyle and reduce isolation and dependence, which in turn may protect against some aspects of poor mental health.