

Quality of Life for Patients with Ostomies Living in the Big Bend

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Purpose: This study is being conducted to determine whether or not an ostomy patient's contact with a WOC nurse improves quality of life for ostomy patients living in the Big Bend area of Northern Florida.

Methodology: Home health agencies, hospitals, and a DME that services patients in Northern Florida were contacted to participate in the study. The role of the participating facilities was to collate a list of patients with an ostomy, address the provided envelopes and mail the patient survey packet (introductory letter, Ostomy Quality of Life Questionnaire [OQLQ], and demographic survey) directly to the patient.

Sample size: Three hundred fifty packets were mailed with a return rate of 36% (N=127).

Statistics: A descriptive, non-experimental design was used for data analysis. The Wilcoxon signed rank test and the Kruskal-Wallis test were used for test significance of the OQLQ and an exact Wilcoxon test was used when the sample was less than 10 in a dichotomous comparison.

Results: The mean age of the respondents were 62 and the mean time of living with an ostomy was 10 years. Ninety-six percent of the respondents did not attend support groups, yet nearly 50% reported receiving education following discharge home. Within the OQLQ there was statistical significance for mean scores related to who the respondent was living with, number of comorbidities, how the respondent received supplies, and type of appliance worn.

Conclusion: There was no significant difference between respondents who saw an ostomy nurse and those who did not among the various sections of the OQLQ even though 83% had been seen by an ostomy nurse. Body image was a concern to respondents in both the linear and nonlinear transformation of the data. The overall QOLQ Index was more positive in the linear transformation index versus the non-linear analysis.