

Editorial

Quality of Life Research in Otorhinology

Traditional concepts in medicine frequently consider the physical conditions of the patient as the sole subject of diagnostics and therapy. In many cases the impact of emotional or social factors on characteristics and course of the disease are underestimated.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity [1]. On the basis of this definition a multidimensional construct was developed including mental and social dimensions into the assessment of health-related quality of life (QOL).

QOL research started in the field of oncology. However, since the nineties more and more QOL measures for non-oncologic otorhinology diseases were developed. Examples for that are the Sino-Nasal Outcome Test 20 (SNOT-20) for application in patients with chronic rhinosinusitis, the Chronic Ear Survey (CES) for use in patients with chronic otitis media, or the Voice Handicap Index (VHI) which allows QOL assessment of dysphonic patients [2-4].

In this special issue we focus on different health conditions in otorhinology. The articles by Baumann and Skevas *et al.* deal with very common ENT diseases (chronic rhinosinusitis, chronic tonsillitis) which are of great medical and economic importance in daily practice [5, 6]. A large number of publications have been published on these topics over the last fifteen years and were analyzed in writing the reviews. Christoph Löffler *et al.* give a nice overview on QOL in Cochlear Implant patients which has increasingly been investigated over the past years [7]. Another paper by Holderried *et al.* updates information on QOL in patients with hereditary hemorrhagic teleangiectasia (HHT) [8]. Furthermore, Sertel *et al.* give an overview on QOL measurements in patients treated with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) [9].

This special issue of TOORLJ does not have the intention to cover all aspects of QOL research in otorhinology. However, it gives an introduction into this important and prospering field of research which nowadays deals with common as well as rare diseases in otology.

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