

EuroQol (EQ5D) outcome measure

In 1990, the EuroQol group published the findings of their work developing a quality of life measure¹. The EQ5D is a generic instrument for describing and evaluating health status; it is used in a variety of different research and clinical settings. It describes health in terms of five dimensions:

- Mobility
- Self-care
- Usual activities
- Pain/discomfort
- Anxiety/depression

EQ5D exists currently in three different versions i.e. EQ5D-3L, EQ5D-Y, and EQ5D-5L.

- In EQ5D-3L, each dimension uses three levels of severity corresponding to no problems, some problems, and extreme problems.
- EQ5D-Y is a youth version suitable for self-completion by children and adolescents aged 7-12 years).
- EQ5D-5L. In 2005, a EuroQol Task Force investigated methods to improve the sensitivity of the EQ5D-3L and reduce ceiling effects². It was decided that the number of dimensions should remain the same, but reliability and sensitivity could be increased by using five levels of severity while maintaining feasibility and potentially reducing ceiling effects. Each dimension now has five levels i.e. no problems, slight problems, moderate problems, severe problems, and extreme problems.

More information concerning this instrument is available from the EuroQol website³.

Translations

The EQ5D has been translated into many different languages in a range of versions.

- EQ5D-3L (<http://www.euroqol.org/eq-5d-products/eq-5d-3l.html>)
- EQ5D-5L (<http://www.euroqol.org/eq-5d-products/eq-5d-5l.html>)
- EQ5D Youth version (<http://www.euroqol.org/eq-5d-products/eq-5d-y.html>)
- EQ5D-Tablet version (<http://www.euroqol.org/eq-5d-products/eq-5d-y/tablet.html>)

Mode of use

The EQ5D-3L consists of two pages. It is completed by the patient (where possible). Initially they are asked to indicate their health state by placing a tick/cross against what they regard to be the most appropriate statement in each of the five dimensions being measured.

The patient rates also their overall health on the day of their consultation using a hash-marked vertical visual analogue scale (EQ-VAS) measuring from 0-100.

Further information concerning how to use the EQ5D-3L can be found at <http://www.euroqol.org/about-eq-5d/how-to-use-eq-5d.html>.

Scoring and interpretation

The first part of the EQ5D acts as a qualitative assessment of the patient's health. The value from the visual analogue scale acts as a quantitative measure of health outcome from the patient's own assessment.

Validity and reliability

The EQ5D has been tested for reliability and validity in a variety of different patient groups e.g. patients with osteoarthritis of the knee joint, and rheumatoid arthritis^{4,5}.

References:

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2. Herman M, Gudex C, Lloyd A, et al. Development and preliminary testing of the new five-level version of EQ-5D (EQ-5D-5L). *Quality of Life Research*. 2011;20(10):1727-3. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3220807/pdf/11136_2011_Article_9903.pdf
3. EuroQol website: <http://www.euroqol.org/>. (Accessed 06-11-2012).
4. Fransen M, Edmonds J. Reliability and validity of the EuroQol in patients with osteoarthritis of the knee. *Rheumatology (Oxford)*. 1999;38(9):807-13. <http://rheumatology.oxfordjournals.org/content/38/9/807.full.pdf+html>
5. Hurst NP, Kind P, Ruta D, et al. Measuring health-related quality of life in rheumatoid arthritis: validity, responsiveness and reliability of EuroQol (EQ-5D). *British Journal of Rheumatology*. 1997;36(5):551-9. <http://rheumatology.oxfordjournals.org/content/36/5/551.long>