

Research Report: Summary

Quality of life in people with spinal cord injury: A scoping review

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1. Introduction

Quality of life (QoL) is vital. It affects health and wellbeing, and is key to living a meaningful life. This study produces knowledge on QoL among spinal cord injured people.

2. Methodology

A scoping method was used. This is a way of systematically reviewing the literature.

3. Results

Reviewing over 200 papers, the scoping study produced the following results.

- ✓ Whilst no consensus exists on 'what is QoL', it can usefully be described as the person's perception of and satisfaction with how things are in their life.
- ✓ To understand QoL, three methods are used by researchers: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods. All have strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ Several factors or domains impact positively and negatively on QoL. In no order of hierarchy, and recognising that many are inter-connected / overlapping, these factors are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Results

- Environment (accessible homes)
- Relationships
- Physical body (e.g. pain)
- Control (e.g. of the body)
- Occupation / Finance
- Identity
- Growth (e.g. having a meaningful life)
- Mental (e.g. resilience)
- Physical activity and sport
- Narrative (e.g. the type of story told)
- Individual variables (e.g. age)

4. Implications for policy

- ✓ Evidence based information needs to be offered on what can improve QoL.
- ✓ Provisions are needed so spinal injured people can act on the information offered.
- ✓ Low cost activities, like physical activity or narrative care, are needed.

5. Future directions

- ✓ Qualitative and quantitative and research is needed that examines what best promotes QoL among spinal injured people living in the community.