

Abstract EFAS/DGA 2007

QoL perception: Comparison between tinnitus patients and their relatives (Preliminary results)

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Background/aims: Tinnitus is a very common problem and very distressing to some patients. In fact, research shows that the Quality of Life (QoL) of tinnitus patients is worse than that of the general population.

Additionally, the literature indicates that there is divergence between patients and relatives as far as QoL perception is concerned. Tinnitus patients often consider that their relatives don't pay them enough attention and don't value their tinnitus. This can worsen the tinnitus perception and related complaints. All this can be even worse if the patients don't have social support.

Consequently, the aim of the present study was to compare the QoL perception between patients and their relatives.

Methods: To do so, the QOL of adults with tinnitus complaints is being assessed by themselves and by their relatives or caregivers, who come with them to an ENT clinic. A socio-demographic and clinical questionnaire and the Portuguese version of the SF-36v2 are being used.

Results Currently, we have only 19 pairs of protocols. So far, the results indicate that the QoL perceived by the patients is worse than that reported by their relatives (T test $p=0,000$ in all SF-36 dimension scales).

Conclusions These results are different from the ones found in the literature. Although the sample is very small, the results suggest it is important to include the patients' relatives in the therapeutic procedures.

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