

Quality of Life and its associated factors among adult (18 years and above) asthmatic patients at a tertiary care hospital in Kalutara, Sri Lanka

R.D.R.P.S. Vipulasena¹, S.U. Weerakoon¹, P.G.T.R. Wickramasinghe¹, S.B. Wickremasinghe¹, M.G.B. Wijebahu¹, Fernando NS²

¹Lecturer, Department of Community Medicine and Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Kotelawala Defence University

²Medical student, Faculty of Medicine, University of Moratuwa

Introduction - Asthma is a chronic inflammatory respiratory disease that affects millions globally and remains a major public health issue in Sri Lanka. It substantially impacts physical, psychological, and social well-being, reducing quality of life (QoL). Despite its prevalence, limited research has focused on QoL and associated determinants among adult asthmatic patients in Kalutara. This study aimed to assess QoL and identify associated factors among adult asthma patients attending a tertiary care hospital in Kalutara.

Materials and Methods - A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 150 adult asthma patients selected by systematic sampling at the Teaching Hospital, Kalutara. Data were collected through an interviewer-administered questionnaire comprising sociodemographic data, environmental and lifestyle factors, disease-related characteristics, and the WHOQOL-BREF tool. Data were analyzed using SPSS software, with Chi-square tests applied to identify associations between independent variables and QoL. A WHOQOL-BREF score ≥ 60 was considered indicative of good QoL.

Results - Among the 150 participants (62% females; mean age 54 years), 63.3% had poor QoL, while 36.7% had good QoL. Significant associations with poor QoL included marital status, lower education level, and lower monthly income ($p < 0.05$). Environmental and lifestyle factors, such as anxiety/depression, also showed significant correlations with reduced QoL. Disease-related factors, longer duration of diagnosis, frequent asthma attacks, breathing difficulty, and concerns about medication, were found to significantly lower QoL. However, allergen exposure, smoking, and diet showed no statistically significant impact.

Discussion - Asthma negatively affects QoL across physical, psychological, and social domains. Lower socioeconomic status, poor disease control, and psychological distress exacerbate the burden. Enhancing patient education, ensuring access to healthcare, providing financial support, and integrating mental health interventions are recommended to improve overall QoL. Future longitudinal and multi-center studies are suggested for broader generalizability.

Keywords - Asthma, Quality of life, WHOQOL-BREF, Adults, Kalutara