P059 QUALITY OF LIFE IN COMPLEX ABDOMINAL WALL HERNIA PATIENTS

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Aim: determine themes reported as important to Quality of Life (QoL) in Complex Abdominal Wall Hernia (CAWH) patients

Material and Methods: 15 purposively sampled CAWH patients were interviewed using topic guides (8 men and 7 women aged between 36 to 85 years [median = 65 years] covering all VHWG grades). All verbatim transcripts were coded and analysed using NVIVO12 software and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) until thematic saturation.

Results: 3 overarching groupings and 5 superordinate themes were identified. Each superordinate theme is associated with several subordinate themes:

1) Effects on psychology: body image (broken down into the sub-themes ‘changes to perceptions of self’ and ‘fears concerning perceptions of others’) and mental health (split into the subthemes ‘emotional responses’, ‘disruptions to previously solid aspects of identity’, ‘developing coping strategies’).

2) Effects on daily life: symptoms (with the emerging subthemes ‘managing pain’, ‘freedom of movement’, ‘restriction and adaptation’).

3) Effects on social dynamics: interpersonal relationships (with the subthemes of ‘difficulties socially connecting’ and ‘changes in sexual relations’) and employment (categorised into the following...
subthemes 'financial pressure', 'return to work issues', 'costs to family').

Conclusions: This is the first phenomenological qualitative study in CAWH patients. The themes presented are interrelated and should shape our understanding of QoL in CAWH. Current QoL tools do not incorporate all aspects identified by this study. Further research is needed in order to generate a standardised CAWH QoL instrument which incorporates bio-psycho-emotional-social processes important to patients as identified by patients.