

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF QUALITY  
OF LIFE ASSESSMENT IN CANCER PATIENTS  
AMONG HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL**

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## ABSTRACT

Quality of life assessment refers to the assessment of quality of life by the means of specific tools and methods, such as questionnaires and interviews. There has been increasing awareness of the importance of quantifying health-related quality of life in patients with chronic diseases such as cancer. The purpose of this study were to determine the awareness and perceptions levels of healthcare professionals on quality of life assessment in cancer patients, to compare the views between different healthcare professionals on quality of life assessment in cancer patients, and also to determine the strength of correlation between awareness and perception of quality of life assessment in cancer patients among healthcare professionals. There were a total of 40 respondents comprising of 12 doctors (medical officers and house officers), and 14 nurses dealing with cancer patients, and 14 pharmacists from different departments from Hospital Tengku Ampuan Rahimah (HTAR), Klang. The instrument used was a self developed Awareness and Perception of Quality of Life Assessment questionnaire (Appendix A). Generally, this study has shown that there is a good awareness on quality of life assessments among healthcare professionals. Pharmacists are shown to have the highest awareness on quality of life assessments in cancer patients. This study also showed that there's an overall positive perception of quality of life assessment in cancer patients. There was no significant difference in terms of quality life assessments perception among all three professions and all of them did not consider the assessment as time consuming or burdening. There was also a moderate correlation between the levels of awareness and perception among doctors, nurses and pharmacists which means that an increase in awareness levels does not necessarily lead to an increase in the perception levels. Thus, further research should be done to fully understand this relationship and consequently to educate healthcare professionals on the relevance and importance of quality of life assessments in cancer patients.

**Keywords:** quality of life assessment, cancer patients, awareness, perception, doctors, nurses, pharmacists

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Cancer is a major cause of mortality and morbidity. Although treatments have the potential to cure or prolong life in many individuals, both the disease and its treatment can cause substantial suffering, impairment in quality of life (QOL), and disturbance of psychosocial functioning (McLachlan *et al.*, 2001).

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines quality of life as individuals' perception of life in the context of their culture and value system in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns (WHOQOL-BREF, 1996). According to Katschnig (1997), quality of life refers to "a loosely related body of work on psychological well-being, social and emotional functioning, health status, functional performance, life satisfaction, social support, and standard of living, whereby normative, objective, and subjective indicator of physical, social and emotional functioning are all used." Quality of life in medical care refers to the patient's ability to enjoy normal life activities. This includes in terms of physical, mental, and existential or spiritual health. Some medical conditions and treatments can seriously impair quality of