

PREDICTIVE VALUE OF DIFFERENT SEVERITY MEASURES FOR INTERFERENCE WITH DAILY LIFE FUNCTIONING OF PSYCHOGERIATRIC PATIENTS

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According to DSM- IV, dementia constitutes of aspects of cognition and interference with daily life. Severity measures like the MMSE, CAMCOG (both cognitive measures) and IADL (questionnaire for caregiver on activities for daily living) are used separately to denominate the state of severity and indicate treatment with choline esterase inhibitors. There is, however, no general accepted measure for the degree of dementia and it is unclear whether these instruments measure interference with daily life.

In our opinion, it is important to observe directly what a patient is capable of in order to find out if there is interference with daily life. To do so, we used the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (AMPS). The AMPS measures motor and process skills by means of a structured, direct observation of daily life activities, as chosen by the patient himself. This study examined the extent to which the MMSE, CAMCOG and IADL could predict interference with daily life functioning as measured with the AMPS. This study also examined the influence of depression and apathy on the relationship between the severity measures and daily life functioning. Participants were recruited from the Diagnostic Observation Centre for psychogeriatric patients of Maastricht University. A total number of 115 patients participated. Cross sectional data of the MMSE, CAMCOG, IADL and the AMPS were collected, just as depression and apathy scores based on the NPI. The CAMCOG turned out to be the best predictor for functioning in daily life (32.4% explained variance). The second best predictor was the IADL (24.4% explained variance), followed by the MMSE (22.9% explained variance). Depression did not have an effect on all three relationships. Apathy had only a small effect on the MMSE (4.1% explained variance). In conclusion, severity measures alone are not sufficient to denominate the state of severity, including interference with daily life. It is recommended to observe relevant activities of daily life before denominating state of severity and indicating medication.