Change in Health-Related Quality of Life Among Individuals With Cancer Undergoing Smoking Cessation Treatment Involving Varenicline

Julia R. May, BS, Nancy C. Jao, PhD, Kristen McCarter, PhD, Elizabeth Klass, RN, BSN, Timothy Pearman, PhD, ABPP, Frank Leone, MD, Robert A. Schnoll, PhD, and Brian Hitsman, PhD

OBJECTIVES: To determine whether health-related quality of life (HRQOL) among individuals with cancer is undermined by smoking cessation treatment involving varenicline.

SAMPLE & SETTING: Participants (N = 103) were daily smokers with cancer (up to five years postdiagnosis) who completed a placebo-controlled trial of standard versus extended duration varenicline.

METHODS & VARIABLES: For this secondary study, participants were selected based on having completed the SF-12® at weeks 0, 1, 12, and 24. Using separate repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance, change in SF-12 scores was evaluated by time and by cancer treatment, varenicline duration, and quit status at week 24.

RESULTS: There was no change in any of the three HRQOL scores by time or by cancer treatment status, varenicline duration, or quit status. Average emotional HRQOL score across time was significantly higher for quitters versus smokers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: Varenicline, including long-term treatment, does not appear to adversely affect HRQOL, which is highly relevant to oncology nurses who are well positioned to assist with the pharmacologic treatment of tobacco dependence.

KEYWORDS: cancer; oncology; nursing; varenicline; quality of life; smoking cessation

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