

## PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH SHORT STATURE

*M. Bullinger, QOLISSY Study Group*

Department of Medical Psycholog, University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf, Hamburg, Germany

**Introduction and aims:** Findings regarding impairments in quality of life of children and adolescents with short stature are not unequivocal. The present paper examines prevalence of such impairments, their mutual relationship, potential determinants and differences between patient self-report and parent report.

**Methods:** Children and adolescents (n=218) with short stature (idiopathic short stature and growth hormone deficit) and their parents provided assessments of psychological health (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire - SDQ) and health related quality of life (KIDSCREEN Questionnaire). Variance and regression analysis were used to identify group differences and potential determinants of quality of life.

**Results:** Child-reported SDQ total score was in the normal range in over 80% of cases, while 7.8 % were identified as borderline impaired and 8.2 % were classified as abnormal. Parents ratings were 76 % normal, 8.6 % borderline and 17.8 % abnormal. Impairments were found for young children, for boys and for very short patients. Analysis of variance showed higher KIDSCREEN scores in the SDQ normal group. SDQ and KIDSCREEN correlated significantly. Half of the variance in KIDSCREEN scores was explained by a combination of SDQ scores, clinical status and sociodemographic data in child and parent samples.

**Conclusion:** Parents reported higher impairments in psychological health than children. SDQ related differences in KIDSCREEN scores and the proportion of variance in QoL explained by the SDQ suggest that mental health should be routinely assessed in children with short stature as a part of the diagnostic process. Psychological interventions should be considered when clinically indicated.