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Psychometrics of the Patient Health Questionnaire for the Measurement of Depressive Symptoms in Patients with Heart Failure

Author Information:

Authors List:
Presenting Author: Muna Hammash
Additional Author: Debra Moser
Additional Author: Terry Lennie
Additional Author: Seongkum Heo
Additional Author: Misook Chung

Presenting Author: Muna H Hammash
Address: 3401 Gatewood CT APT#77
Lexington, KY 40517
USA
Ph: 859-323-4305
Fax:
Email: mhhamm2@uky.edu
Institution: University of Kentucky

Additional Author: Debra K. Moser
Address: 527 CON, 760 Rose Street APT#77
Lexington, KY 40536
USA
Ph: 859-323-6687
Fax:
Email: dmoser@uky.edu
Institution: University of Kentucky

Additional Author: Terry A. Lennie
Address: 529 CON, 760 Rose Street APT#77
Lexington, KY 40536
USA
Ph: 859-323-6631
Fax:
Email: tlennie@uky.edu
Institution: University of Kentucky

Additional Author: Seongkum Heo
Address: Indiana University School of Nursing APT#77
Indianapolis, IN 46202
USA
Ph: 317-274-4650
Fax:
Email: heo2@iupui.edu
Institution: Indiana University

Additional Author: Misook L. Chung
Address: 539 CON, 760 Rose Street APT#77
Lexington, KY 40536
USA
Ph: 859-323-8024
Fax:
Email: misook.chung@uky.edu
Institution: University of Kentucky

Abstract Information

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Introduction:
Purpose: To test the psychometric properties (i.e., reliability and validity) of the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) in patients with heart failure (HF) Research Hypotheses: PHQ-9 will have evidence of reliability and validity. Significance: Depression in patients with HF commonly goes undiagnosed and untreated. The PHQ-9 is a simple and valid measure of depression in the clinical setting. The instrument has not, however, been validated in patients with HF

Method(s):
A sample of 171 patients with HF completed the BDI-II, the PHQ-9, the Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) Specific Adherence Scale, and the Control Attitudes Scale (CAS). Socio-demographic and clinical data were obtained from patient interviews and medical record review. Internal consistency was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The BDI-II was used as the criterion measure of depression. The MOS and the CAS were used to confirm the validity of the PHQ-9. The criterion-related validity was assessed using Spearman's rho. Comparative analyses of rates of adherence, and perceived control in depressed vs. non-depressed patients were computed using the t-test.

Results:
Cronbach's ± of .83 supported the internal consistency of the PHQ-9. The Spearman correlation coefficient between the PHQ-9 and the BDI-II scores was .80 (p < .001), demonstrating adequate criterion-related validity. Patients identified as depressed based on the PHQ-9 and the BDI-II had low adherence to the HF treatment regimen compared to non-depressed patients. Patients with higher levels of perceived control had lower depression scores than patients with low perceived control based on the scores of the BDI-II (10.4 ± 8.6 vs. 15.6 ± 8.9, t= -3.7, p < .0001) and the PHQ-9 (5.6 ± 5.3 vs. 9.7 ± 5.3, t = -4.7, p < .0001) supporting acceptable construct validity.

Discussion:
The PHQ-9 is a reliable and valid measure of depression in patients with HF and could be used to screen for depression in this patient population.

Research Completed: Yes

Abstract History:
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Submitted By: mhhamm2@uky.edu