Abstract

Quality of life and family functioning of patients with schizophrenia are described. A sample of 49 schizophrenic patients and their 70 relatives, treated at the Mental Health Services of Arica, Chile, were included in the study. The Quality of Life Questionnaire of Sevilla (CSCV), the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) and the Family Function Questionnaire (APGAR) were used to assess the patients, the last one also administered to their caregivers. Contrary to the results found in researches done in developed countries, the patients of this sample indicated suitable levels of quality of life, to a great extent, related to the perception of their family functioning. This confirms the importance of the family as social network of emotional support. Nevertheless, perceived family functioning is different in patients and their caregivers. Higher scores were obtained in caregivers who participated in a family psychoeducational program. The conclusion reached was that there are differences in the levels of quality of life perceived by patients of developed countries and those of developing countries, being higher in the latter ones, despite limitations in economic, sanitary and community resources. Future research should study why the variables that explain these levels of quality of life differ.