

26th Global Nursing & Health Care Conference

May 06-07, 2019 | Rotterdam, Netherlands

Linking concept of functional evaluation for patients with chronic heart failure with systematic review and ICF

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Aim: The main aim of the present study is to determine the initial concept of functional evaluation for patients with chronic heart failure (CHF) in the views of international classification of functioning, disability and health (ICF).

Materials & Methods: Clinical researches on patients with chronic heart failure for nearly five years were recalled from Cochrane Library, PubMed, Embase, CNKI, WanFang, CBM databases. Two researchers extracted and linked the concept with ICF through standard link rules independently. Finally, 116 researches were recalled, including 177 function assessment index non-redundantly. The concepts linked with ICF in 116 second categories. Of these, 66 categories were considered most relevant to CHF (identified in at least 5% of the studies), of which 25 were related to body functions, two were related to body structure, 31 were related to activities and participation, eight were related with environmental factors. The six most frequently identified categories were heart function (n=90), cardiovascular system structure (n=49), blood vessel function (n=43), respiratory function (n=41), motor tolerance function (n=40) and walking (n=40).

Conclusion: In conclusion, the broad variety of ICF categories identified in this study reflects the heterogeneity of functional differences found in CHF and underlines the potential value of the ICF as a framework to capture an individual's functioning. The current results in combination with further clinical researches and Delphi survey will provide the scientific basis for defining the CHF-ICF core sets. It is conducive to the follow-up development of individualized, detailed and dynamic treatment and nursing interventions for patients with CHF based on comprehensive evaluation.