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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease from a Patient's Perspective

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Introduction Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) face years of disability or early death. As no intervention can repair lung damage, the focus of care is to try to improve the quality of life of such patients by helping them 'live with their disease'

Aim The aim of this study was to gain an insight into the impact of living with COPD from patient perspectives, to identify their needs and look at whether the current provision of services address these needs

Method The qualitative approach described by Strauss & Corbin (1990) was used. Semi structured, tape-recorded interviews were carried out in eight male out-patient's homes. The interviews were subsequently transcribed and analysed using the constant comparative technique

Results and Conclusions: As highlighted by previous research, the results suggest that the physical, psychological and social consequences of COPD have a profound effect on the lives of patients who suffer from this disease. Patients described multiple problems such as difficulty coping with activities of daily living, social isolation, depression and extreme pressure on relationships. Current services were not addressing these problems. Further research is needed to identify which interventions would improve the patient's experience of living with COPD and when these interventions should be introduced

References Strauss, AL and Corbin, J. (1990) *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* Sage

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