

This is a **Sample** version of the

Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI)

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- DLQI Scoring/ Administration instructions
- DLQI Complete questionnaire Assessment (10 sets of question criteria)
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Translating the Science of Quality of Life into Practice: What Do Dermatology Life Quality Index Scores Mean?

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This study's aim was to determine the relationship between Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI) scores and a Global Question (GQ) concerning patients' views of the overall impairment of their skin-related quality of life (QoL), and to express this relationship by identifying bands of DLQI scores equivalent to each GQ descriptor. A DLQI questionnaire and the GQ were mailed to 3834 adult general dermatology outpatients. There were 1993 (52%) responses: male 841; female 1152. Mean DLQI score = 4.86 (range 0–30, standard deviation (SD) = 5.83). Mean GQ score = 1.22 (range 0–4, SD = 1.20). The mean, mode, and median of the GQ scores for each DLQI score were used to devise several sets of bands of DLQI scores, and κ coefficients of agreement calculated. The set proposed for adoption is: DLQI scores 0–1 = no effect on patient's life (GQ = 0, n = 754); DLQI scores 2–5 = small effect on patient's life (GQ = 1, n = 611); DLQI scores 6–10 = moderate effect on patient's life (GQ = 2, n = 327); DLQI scores 11–20 = very large effect on patient's life (GQ = 3, n = 242); DLQI scores 21–30 = extremely large effect on patient's life (GQ = 4, n = 59); κ coefficient 0.489. Banding of the DLQI will aid the clinical interpretation of an individual's DLQI score and allow DLQI scores to inform clinical decisions.

Key words: global question/quality of life/questionnaire/score meaning/skin disease
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Health-related quality of life (HRQoL) measurement assesses burden of illness and allows assessment of the outcomes of medical treatments (Calman, 1984; Price and Harding, 1993; Finlay, 1997). It can be defined as the subjective perception of the impact of health status, including disease and treatment, on physical, psychological, and social well-being. HRQoL in skin patients may be assessed using generic or specific HRQoL instruments (Bergner *et al*, 1981; Finlay and Kelly, 1987; Finlay and Khan, 1994). Validated dermatology-specific instruments include the Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI); Dermatology Quality of Life Scales; and Dermatology Specific Quality of Life and Skindex (Finlay and Khan, 1994; Chren *et al*, 1996; Anderson and Rajagopalan, 1997; Morgan *et al*, 1997). The DLQI is concise and user-friendly with only ten questions (Finlay and Khan, 1994) (see Fig 1). Its reliability and validity have been demonstrated (Zachariae *et al*, 2000; Hahn *et al*, 2001; Mork *et al*, 2002) and it has been used in over 137 studies in 20 countries (Lewis and Finlay, 2004).

Although high DLQI scores equate to high HRQoL impairment, interpretation of the clinical meaning of the scores is not adequately researched for the DLQI or for other dermatology HRQoL measurement techniques and this is a significant issue in dermatology (Schiffner *et al*, 2003). The lack of such information in dermatology is in contrast to

other areas of medicine such as oncology (Osoba, 2002), spinal cord injury (May and Warren, 2001), and hematology (Gulbrandsen *et al*, 2004). Assessment of the “meaningfulness” of DLQI scores is essential if clinicians are to be able to use such measures as an aid to decision taking in patient management. It has been demonstrated that DLQI scores do change significantly if the clinical activity of psoriasis changes and that in psoriasis the DLQI can detect small but meaningful changes in clinical status over time (Mazzotti *et al*, 2003). This study uses an anchor question approach in order to establish ranges of scores reflecting patients' global rating of quality of life (QoL); this is considered an essential first step before addressing the question of minimal important difference.

It is believed that the examination of the relationship between DLQI scores and patients' view of their overall impairment of HRQoL will enhance dermatologists' understanding of the application of HRQoL outcomes in clinical practice.

Results

From the 3834 patients who were posted the study pack, there were 1993 (52.0%) evaluable responses. Of these 1712 were on the waiting list (WL) and 281 had already been seen in outpatients (AS). The demographic details of those patients who had already been seen were very similar to those patients who were still on the WL. The only significant difference between these sub-groups was in the mean DLQI (WL = 4.70, AS = 5.79, $p = 0.0012$) and mean Global Question (GQ) (WL = 1.18, AS = 1.48, $p < 0.0005$) scores.

Abbreviations: DLQI, Dermatology Life Quality Index; GQ, Global Question; HRQoL, Health-related quality of life; QoL, quality of life; SD, standard deviation; WL, waiting list

Declaration of interest: A.Y. Finlay is joint copyright owner of the DLQI; his department gains income from the use of the DLQI.

**This is the end of the SAMPLE DLQI clinical validity.
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Instructions for use

Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI)

The Dermatology Life Quality Index questionnaire is designed for use in adults, i.e. patients over the age of 16. It is self explanatory and can be simply handed to the patient who is asked to fill it in without the need for detailed explanation. It is usually completed in one to two minutes.

Scoring

The scoring of each question is as follows:

****Please Note:** That the scores associated with the different answers should not be printed on the DLQI itself, as this might cause bias**

Meaning of DLQI Scores

- 0-1 = no effect at all on patient's life
- 2-5 = small effect on patient's life
- 6-10 = moderate effect on patient's life
- 11-20 = very large effect on patient's life
- 21-30 = extremely large effect on patient's life

Detailed analysis of the DLQI

The DLQI can be analysed under six headings as follows:

Symptoms and feelings	Questions 1 and 2	Score maximum 6
Daily activities	Questions 3 and 4	Score maximum 6

The scores for each of these sections can also be expressed as a percentage of either 6 or 3.

Interpretation of incorrectly completed questionnaires

There is a very high success rate of accurate completion of the DLQI. However, sometimes subjects do make mistakes.

**This is the end of the SAMPLE DLQI scoring instructions.
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DERMATOLOGY LIFE QUALITY INDEX

DLQI

Hospital No:

Date:

Score:

Name:

Diagnosis:

Address:

The aim of this questionnaire is to measure how much your skin problem has affected your life OVER THE LAST WEEK. Please check one box for each question.

1.	Over the last week, how itchy, sore, painful or stinging has your skin been?	Very much A lot A little Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	Over the last week, how embarrassed or self conscious have you been because of your skin?	Very much A lot A little Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Over the last week, how much has your skin interfered with you going shopping or looking after your home or yard ?	Very much A lot A little Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Over the last week, how much has your skin influenced the clothes you wear?	Very much A lot A little Not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/>

**This is the end of the SAMPLE DLQI questionnaire.
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