



## THE QUALITY OF LIFE, SITUATIONS AND EMERGING CONCERNS OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS IN PHILIPPINE CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Annelyn Fatima M. Lopez, MD, Ermenilda L. Avendano, MD, Aileen Marie O. Vargas, MD, Rorilee Q. Angeles, MD, Lara C. Baylon, MD  
Philippine Children's Medical Center, Child Neuroscience Division, Section of Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics



### BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 resulted in a public health emergency and quarantine measures which may negatively impact psychosocial and environmental aspects of vulnerable populations.

### OBJECTIVES

This study intended to determine the quality of life, situations and emerging concerns of parents of children with neurodevelopmental disorders during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

### METHODOLOGY

Parents of patients seen in the PCMC Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics OPD clinic were recruited to fill out questionnaires on parent and child characteristics, survey on situations and emerging concerns during the coronavirus pandemic and WHOQOL-BREF (Filipino version) for parental quality of life.



### RESULTS

Data from 115 respondents showed a lower score in the environmental domain. The child characteristics that are statistically comparable with the QoL scores include sex, severity of ID and ADHD while the parent characteristics that are statistically comparable with the QoL scores include educational attainment, monthly family income, father's employment status and family structure ( $P$ -value  $<0.05$ ). Most respondents reported physical distancing (82.61%) and curfew (80.87%). Inability to access essential services (43.48-74.48%) were further compounded by limited financial resources (51.30%) and public transport (60%). Government responses received include quarantine pass (90.43%), food allowance or relief package (86.09%), disinfection (60.87%), DSWD-SAP (42.61%) and cash distribution (41.74%).

Concerns encountered include socio-environmental issues: no available transportation (73.04%), effect on ability to work or earn (70.43%), inadequate food/medicine rations (50.43%), disruptions in basic social services (47.83%); and patient concerns: access to education (64.35%), medical (44.74%), developmental (33.04%), behavioral (31.3%), nutrition (20%) and sleep (19.13%).

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Programs and policies should be planned accordingly to provide improvement of quality of life for both parents and the child with a neurodevelopmental disorder.

### KEYWORDS

*Neurodevelopmental Disorder, Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics, Parental Quality of Life, WHOQOL-BREF, COVID-19, coronavirus*