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Title: Enhancing rigour in the validation of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs): Bridging linguistic and psychometric testing

Abstract:

Health questionnaires are being used increasingly in clinical and research settings to monitor the health status of patients and assess the impact of treatment interventions. But individual interpretations of health vary depending on a person's age, experience and cultural background. Thus, all these factors need to be taken into account when developing health instruments so that they are fit for purpose and sensitive to patients' needs.

For bilingual speakers, communicating in a way that responds to their language and cultural needs helps explore their personal dimensions of health and provides a more accurate rendering of their health status. In other words, sharing the same language offers a way of establishing common ground for communication and understanding that helps capture the reality of the patient's perspective. Thus, in the bilingual context of Wales, it is imperative that health questionnaires are offered in English and Welsh, according to individual preference or need. Nevertheless, despite the increasing availability of bilingual healthcare services in Wales, only a few health questionnaires are available in Welsh. This means that some Welsh speakers may be vulnerable to misdiagnosis and mis-management if assessments are not available in their preferred language. Moreover, this deficit also raises concerns about the rigour of clinical research in a bilingual context.

Building on a programme of work that commenced in 2008, the Bangor University based Language Awareness Infrastructure Support Service (LLAIS) www.llais.org for the National Institute for Social Care and Health Research Clinical Research Centre (NISCHR CRC) has led the translation and adaptation of a number of health questionnaires for the Welsh language and tested their efficacy amongst service users. The paper sets out to demonstrate how a thorough and rigorous approach to validation can inform the refinement of translated outcome measures for cross-cultural research and clinical practice. This presentation reports on a recent study focusing on the translation and adaptation of the Beck Depression Inventory (II) (BDI-II). The BDI-II has been translated into a number of languages and has been shown to be robust and appropriate for use in countries across the world. Nevertheless, until recently, there was no Welsh language version of the instrument available. Adopting a rigorous approach, LLAIS, in collaboration with colleagues from Canolfan Bedwyr, IMSCAR and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, led the development of a Welsh language version of the instrument that was later tested amongst a group of Welsh speaking university students and patients involved in the FolATED study, a large scale clinical trial. The research produced not only a robust Welsh language version of the BDI-II, but it also revealed novel and important findings that inform methods of instrument translation and testing at an international level.