

ABSTRACT

Purchasers, consumers and even health service providers are increasingly demanding evidence of health service effectiveness. 'Health outcomes' have been proposed as a way of demonstrating health service effectiveness, placing the onus on clinicians to show that interventions make a difference. Numerous instruments have been developed for the purpose of measuring health outcomes, however there is little literature on the routine use of these measures in a clinical podiatric setting.

An investigation of the outcomes of prescribing non-casted innersoles formed the basis of a case study for the application of the Foot Health Status Questionnaire (FHSQ) in a community based health service. The study was used to investigate the practicalities of the routine collection of health outcomes data in a clinical setting, such as response rates, as well as the effectiveness of the FHSQ as an outcome measure for clinical podiatrists. This paper highlights some of the difficulties in collecting and reporting on health outcomes data in a clinical setting such as low rates of recruitment, the inability to attribute the outcome to the intervention, and problems accessing data. Whilst the FHSQ was sensitive to change, the practicalities of its use in routine clinical practice must be balanced against the value of the results and the practical barriers to its use.

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