



Fund “Nauka” Project № 22009 Resume – Competition-Based Session 2022:

“Quality of life in diabetic retinopathy patients. Evaluation of the treatment effect”

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The main purpose of the study is to assess the quality of life in patients with vision affecting diabetic retinopathy and to evaluate the treatment effect.

Tasks:

1. To investigate the instruments for assessment of quality of life in ophthalmic diseases, in order to select/ develop an adequate instrument in Bulgarian language;
2. To analyze the impact of DR (diabetic retinopathy) and the different methods of its treatment on the quality of life of patients whose vision is affected by the disease;
3. To study the difference in the subjective sensation of pain during the treatment process with conventional laser, pattern scan laser, and subthreshold micropulse laser;
4. To explore the reasons that would lead to refusal of further laser treatment in patients;
5. To analyze patient preferences regarding laser or intravitreal drug injection treatment.

The **subjects of the study** were patients with DR who were treated with laser or in combination with anti-VEGF drugs.

The used **methods** can be divided into the following groups:

1. Clinical – including a complete eye examination, if necessary, fluorescein angiography and/ or optical coherence tomography, laser photocoagulation;
2. Questionnaire – filling in validated questionnaires for assessing the quality of life for patients with visual impairments;
3. Qualitative – interview with patients who have undergone treatment, regarding problems, preferences related to the method of treatment and factors, on the part of the patient, which would lead to refusal of continued laser treatment;
4. Statistical – processing of the obtained results.

Results: The implementation of the project will help to analyze and evaluate the impact of vision-affecting diabetic retinopathy on the quality of life of diabetic patients, as well as to evaluate the impact of different DR treatment methods on it. The obtained results, combined with those of a previous project, can serve to develop a new regional, and why not national health strategy for the prevention of disability and blindness from diabetic retinopathy.