

HEALTH-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE IN OLDER PATIENTS WITH BASAL CELL CARCINOMA: A MULTICENTRIC CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.

Van Coile L.¹, Meertens A.¹, Shen A.¹, Waalboer-Spuij R.², Vossaert K.³, Verhaeghe E.¹, Brochez L.¹, Hoorens I.¹

¹ : Department of Dermatology, University Hospital Ghent, Belgium

² : Department of Dermatology, Erasmus University Medical Centre Rotterdam, The Netherlands

³ : Dermatologie Maldegem (private dermatology practice), Maldegem, Belgium

BACKGROUND

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most frequent malignant tumour worldwide and incidences are rising rapidly. There is an important knowledge gap concerning the impact of BCC on the health-related quality of life (HrQoL) in patients, and the limited available data reports contradicting results. Measuring HrQoL in BCC patients should be done using disease-specific questionnaires such as the Basal and Squamous cell carcinoma Quality of Life (BaSQoL) questionnaire.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To assess the BCC-related HrQoL.
- (2) To examine all relevant patient, tumour and treatment characteristics to identify the main influencing factors for the BCC-related impact.
- (3) Specific attention for older aged BCC patients because of the often complex treatment decisions in this subgroup.

METHODS

- Patients ≥ 18 years with a history of BCC.
- BaSQoL questionnaire, consisting of 5 subdomains (range 0-3, with higher scores meaning more impact on the HrQoL).
- Multivariable analyses using a generalized additive model (GAM) was done for all relevant independent variables because of the need for incorporation of non-linear functions.

RESULTS

- 400 patients, median age of 66 years (range 36-91)
- Mean BaSQoL subscores:
 - 0.78 (SD 0.63) for BaSQoL 'behaviour'
 - 1.01 (SD 0.73) for BaSQoL 'diagnosis&treatment'
 - 0.90 (SD 0.73) for BaSQoL 'worries'
 - 0.40 (SD 0.63) for BaSQoL 'appearance'
 - 1.20 (SD 0.75) for BaSQoL 'other people'
- Generalized Additive Model (GAM) with subsequent ANOVA(2)*:
 - In 4 out of 5 BaSQoL subdomains **the independent variable 'age' showed a significant correlation with the BaSQoL score**
 - BaSQoL behaviour (p=0.007)
 - BaSQoL diagnosis & treatment (p=0.026)
 - BaSQoL worries (p=0.003)
 - BaSQoL appearance (p=0.008)

*Results of the multivariable analyses (GAM with subsequent ANOVA) with all relevant independent variables are displayed in the manuscript, currently under peer review with Scientific Reports.

- Lower BaSQoL scores were seen in older patients, meaning less impact of their BCC on the HrQoL.(3) There was a clear non-linear correlation between the BaSQoL scores and the age (figure 1), illustrating that **the impact of BCC on the HrQoL shows a rapid decrease starting around the age of 70.**

Low to moderate impact of BCCs on the HrQoL.(1)

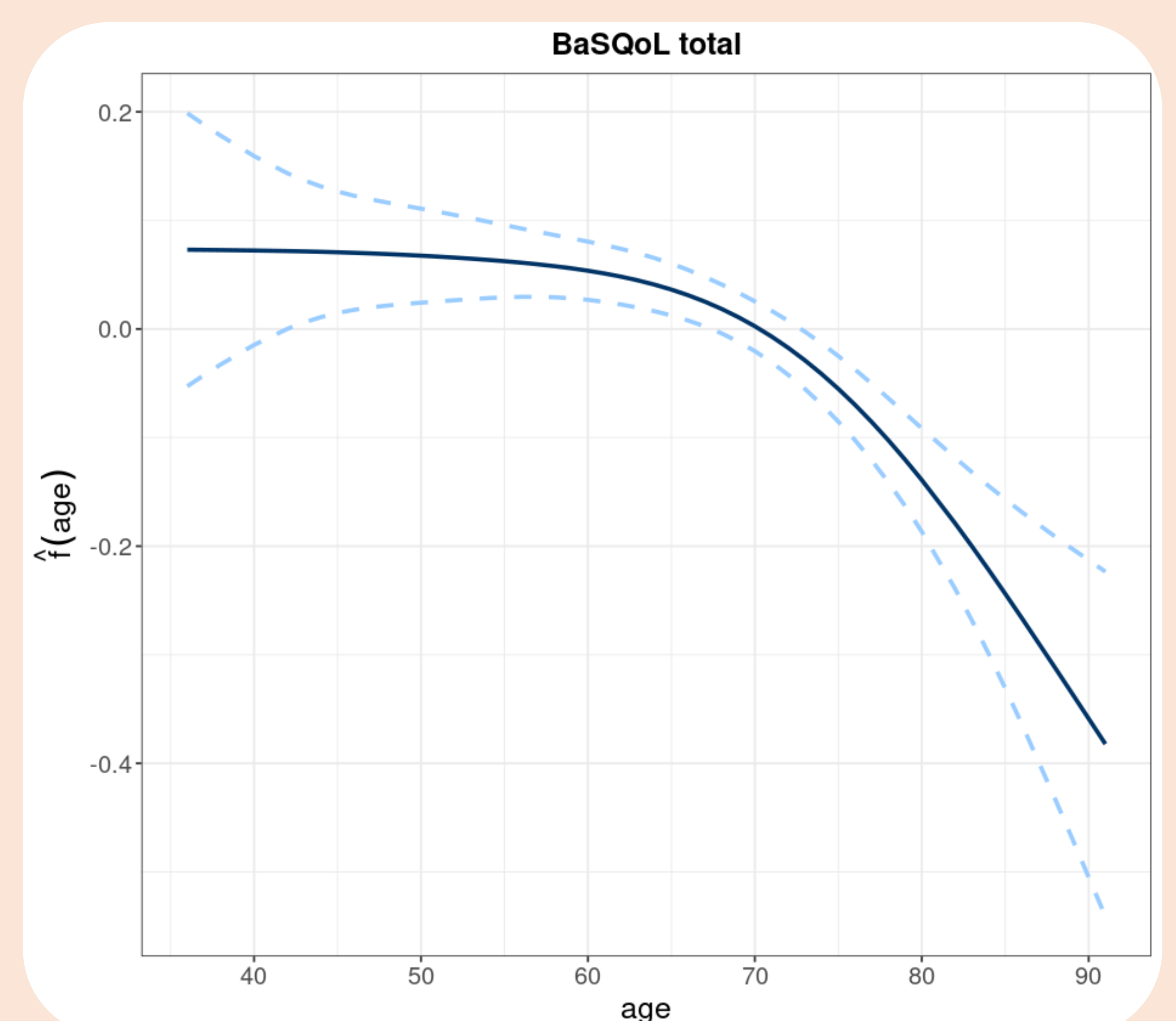


Figure 1. Smooth function of the BaSQoL total score in relation to the independent variable 'age'

CONCLUSIONS / TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- We found a lower BaSQoL score in older adults, thus less impact of the BCC on the HrQoL, with a specific age group of interest starting around the age of 70-75.
- This study is the first to illustrate the relation between the HrQoL of BCC patients and the age of the patients with the use of a disease-specific HrQoL instrument.
- The results of this study are an argument for a potential wait-and-see strategy for BCCs in older patients.