Validating an Herpes Zoster Health Related Quality of Life Conceptual Model in Argentina: literature review and qualitative study

Maria Belizan[1], Ariel Bardach[1], Thatiana Pinto[2], Agustina Villarejo[1], Elena Lazo[1], Maria Victoria Cordo[3], Désirée Van Oorschot[2], Federico Augustovski[1]

[1]IECS, Buenos Aires, Argentina; [2]GSK, Wavre, Belgium; [3]Instituto Médico Platense, La Plata, Argentina

Conclusions

The previously published conceptual Canadian model assessing the impact of HZ on quality of life **can be applied on Argentinian setting**.

New concepts were identified on the disease management level including the **common use of alternative medicine**.

Background

Herpes zoster (HZ) results from the reactivation of latent varicella virus after first infection.[1]

HZ manifests as a **unilateral painful skin rash**.[2]

Long-term **complications of HZ** can occur, like **postherpetic neuralgia (PHN)**, a severe debilitating neurogenic pain.[2,3]

Treatment options for PHN are limited, largely impacting **health-related quality of life** of the patient (HRQoL).[4]

Aims



To conduct a **literature review and assess the patient experience with HZ in Argentina**, in order to validate a previously developed conceptual model in Canada[5]: **symptoms, impact on HRQoL of acute HZ and PHN.**

Methods

Literature review

MEDLINE, EMBASE, LILACS, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar

Focusing on studies (qualitative and quantitative) evaluating the quality of life of patients with HZ/PHN

In Latin America

Qualitative study

Semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions

August 2022 – March 2023

Eligible patients: aged ≥50 years and clinically diagnosed with HZ in Argentina
- **Acute HZ patients:** within 7-60 days post-initial rash
- **PHN patients:** still experiencing pain between 90-120 days post-initial rash.

Results

The results of the 2 qualitative studies are presented in 5 domains

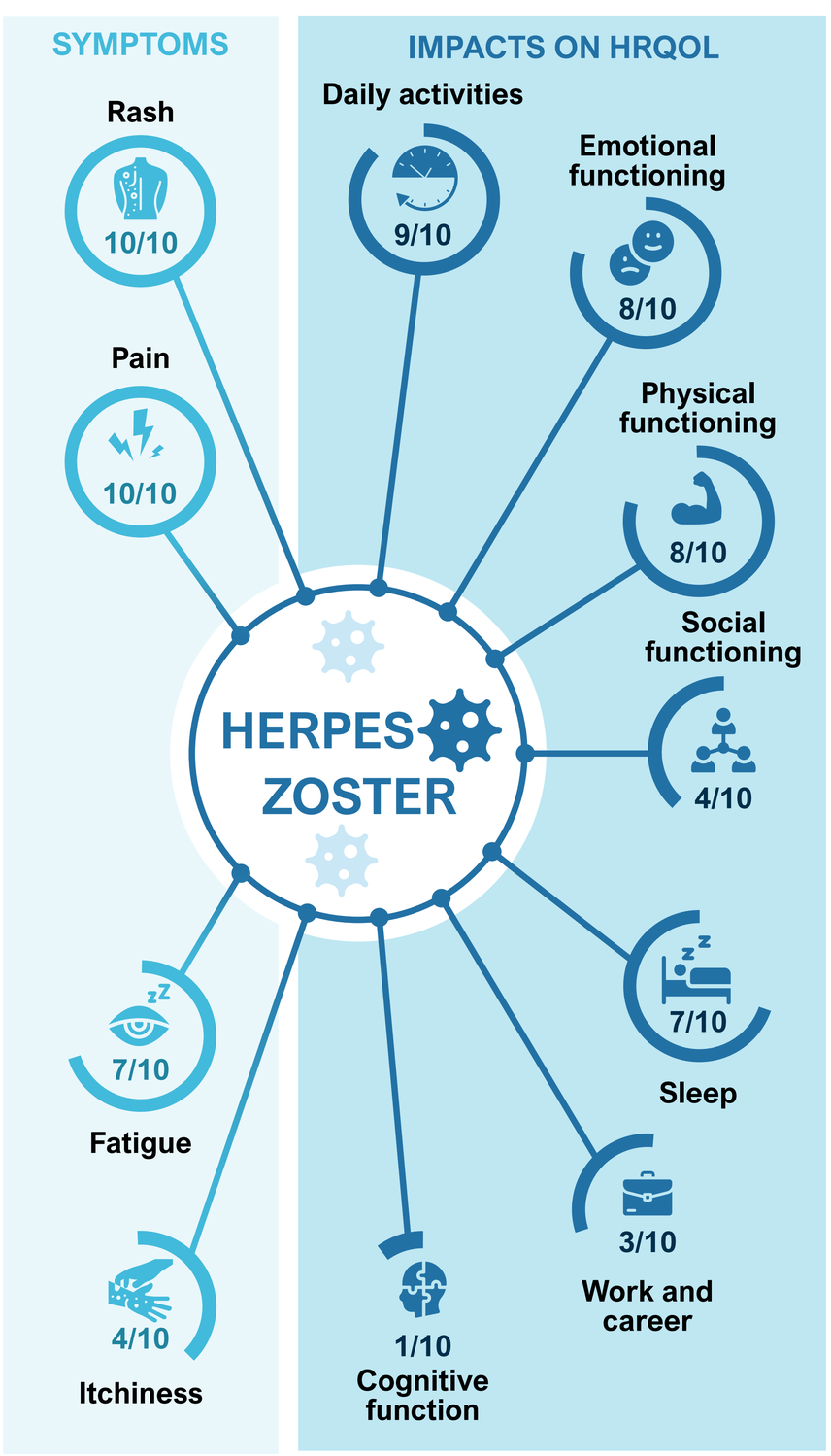
- **Postherpetic neuralgia**
- **Pain management**
- **Disease management**
  - Vaccination against HZ
  - Alternative ways of treating HZ
- **Emotional impact**
- **Family life**
- **Work**

10 patients were interviewed

Median age: 6

- 6 women
- 4 men
- 5 with acute HZ
- 5 with PHN

4 key symptoms were pointed out by the participants, and HZ negatively affected various aspects of patients' HRQoL, during acute and chronic phases



Patient quotes

Use of alternative medicine

"I went to a healer. In my case, she treated me with Chinese ink. When the doctor gave me the ok that it was the disease we were talking about, I attacked from both sides. I started with all the medication the doctor gave me, plus the "curandera". I said "if it doesn't do me any good, it won't do me any harm either"." (Female, PHN)

Pain description

Expanding and changing location, difficult to localize

"The pain was felt in different areas (...) It moved from place to place; one day it was in one area, another day in another, but always in the same zone." (Female, Acute HZ)

"They are confusing pains. It's something that at first you don't know if it's from the organ or if it's from the muscle." (Female, Acute HZ)

Different and unlike any other pain

"I've never had pain like this before." (Female, Acute HZ)

Extreme and intense

"It was as if I had done 10,000 sit-ups there in that area. Then, I would rotate and in another moment, my lower back would hurt like hell." (Female, Acute HZ)

Sharp

"It was like being pricked by needles. It felt like these tiny bugs were crawling around, making me itch from the inside." (Female, Acute HZ)

Interrupts sleep

"I didn't sleep at night, and I didn't sleep during the day either. I had terrible pains that I still suffer from. To sleep I try to get comfortable on one side. I wear nightshirts that don't rub my underarm." (Female, Acute HZ)

Abbreviations

HRQoL, health-related quality of life; HZ, herpes zoster; PHN, postherpetic neuralgia

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Disclosures

Thatiana Pinto is employed by GSK. Désirée Van Oorschot is employed by and hold shares in GSK. They both declare no other financial and no non-financial relationships and activities. Maria Belizan, Ariel Bardach, Agustina Villarejo, Elena Laz, Federico Augustovski and Maria Victoria Cordo declare no financial and non-financial relationships and activities and no conflicts of interest.
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Digital poster
Supplemental data
Narrated summary

SCAN ME

Audio File

Presenting author: Thatiana Pinto - thatiana.x.pinto@gsk.com

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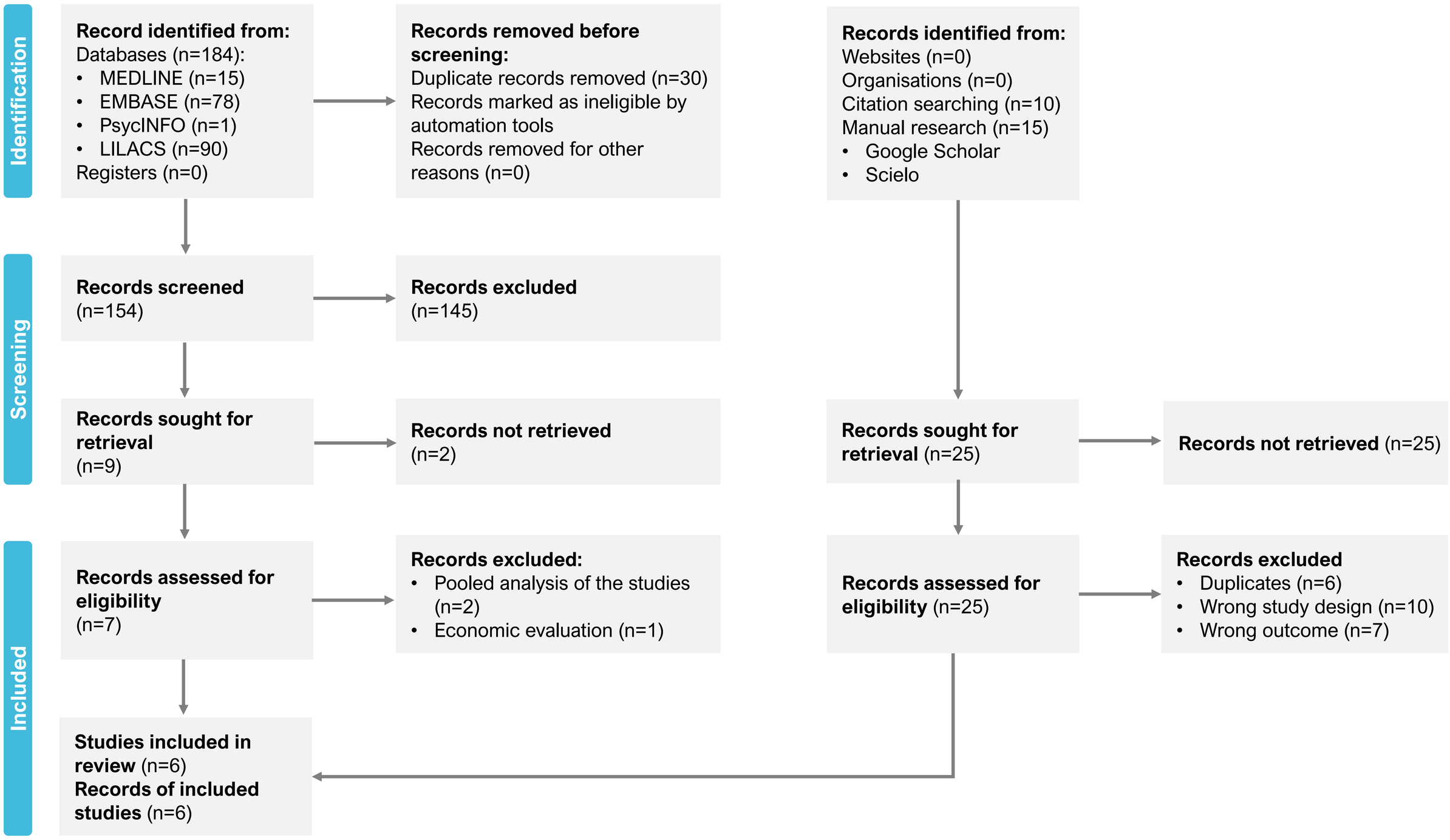
Supplementary material: detailed literature review flow chart



Strengths and limitations

- The current study followed the approach and methodology used in the Canadian study[5]
- Semi-structured interviews: offer a qualitative understanding of patients' experience
- **Limitation:** Small sample and minimal geographical diversity

Presenting author: Thatiana Pinto - thatiana.x.pinto@gsk.com

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