

Life expectancy of liver transplant recipients in the UK

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Liver transplantation is associated with a substantial improvement in length of life for patients with liver disease, but how the long-term survival compares with that of the general population is unknown. The aim of this study was therefore to compare the life expectancy of liver transplant recipients to that of the UK population.

Data were obtained from the National Transplant Database on adult liver transplant recipients who received their transplant in the UK between 1985 and 2003 and had survived the first six months post-transplant. Patient survival time was calculated as time from first liver transplant to patient death. A parametric model was used to estimate the median life expectancy for different combinations of patient age, sex and year of transplant.

The life expectancy for various age, sex and year combinations for the adult UK population were obtained from The Office for National Statistics [1]. Using these data a regression model was developed to predict the life expectancy for age, sex and year combinations within the range covered by the liver transplant data. The predicted life expectancies were weighted according to the distribution of age, sex and year of transplant of patients in the liver dataset.

As the models predict the average life expectancy of adult liver transplant recipients and the equivalent UK population, estimates of the number of life years lost were obtained (overall and for age, sex and year combinations).

Reference:

1. The Office for National Statistics (2004) Table 5.1 Expectation of life at birth & selected age. *Population Trends* [online], 117 (V2), 62. Available from: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PT117_V2.pdf [Accessed 01/11/2004].

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