The Short Portable Mental Status Questionnaire

Original Citation – Pfeiffer E. A short portable mental status questionnaire for the assessment of organic brain deficit in elderly patients. J Am Geriatr Soc. 1975; 23(10);433-441.

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Price & Availability – Available for download through instrument website. Printed in original citation.

Brief Description of Instrument – General assessment of mental status designed for use with an elderly population.

Scale Format – 10 items, short answer.

Administration Technique – Health provider administered.

Scoring and Interpretation – Count number of errors. 0-2 errors: normal mental functioning, 3-4 errors: mild cognitive functioning, 5-7 errors: moderate cognitive functioning, 8 or more errors: severe cognitive functioning.

Factors and Norms – Short term and long term memory, orientation to surroundings, knowledge of current events and the ability to perform mathematical tests. Standardized in elderly population.

Test-retest Reliability – Four week interval, outpatient population r = 0.82; institutional population r = 0.83.

Construct Validity – Agreement between moderate/severe impairment score with clinical
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diagnoses of organic brain syndrome in outpatient population, $\chi^2 = 63.35$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$; institutional population, $\chi^2 = 11.48$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$.

Content & Face Validity – Items modified from existing instruments and clinicians assessments.

Strengths – Demonstrated reliability and validity. Can be used with patients considered "untestable" by other, more complex methods.

Limitations – General assessment, may need to be followed up with more specific test.

Notes for Consideration – Can be used with patients considered "untestable" by other, more complex methods.


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