

How do I complete one?

For the measures you complete, you may be asked to complete a form in the waiting room or in the consultation room, or maybe even to take home and complete between appointments. The measures your doctor, or other mental health professional complete, will be based on the questions they ask, and their discussions with you.

Can I get some help?

There is no problem getting the help of your doctor or mental health professional to complete an outcome measure. They can help, but remember they can't complete the measure for you, because it is about how you are thinking and feeling. But check with them if you have any questions.

Do I have to complete it?

No, you do not have to complete an outcome measure. Feel free to talk to your doctor or mental health professional about why you don't want to and ask any questions that you have.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Is there an outcome measure for my condition?

There are many different outcome measures for various mental health issues. Some of the common ones used in Australia are listed in this leaflet. You can also find more information about outcome measures by talking to your doctor or mental health professional, or by going to www.amhocn.org

Where can I find some more information?

You can find more information about different outcome measures, their use and even complete some online by going to www.amhocn.org

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

For more information on:

- Consumer and carer guidelines on certain mental health conditions, visit www.ranzcp.org
- Consumer and carer information and support for mental health, visit www.sane.org
- Depression and mental health, visit www.beyondblue.org.au
- Crisis support and suicide prevention, visit www.lifeline.org.au
- Mood disorders, visit www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
- Young people and mental health, visit www.headspace.org.au
- Mental health in culturally and linguistically diverse communities, visit www.dhi.gov.au/Multicultural-Mental-Health-Australia/default.asp
- Outcome measures and their use in Australia visit www.amhocn.org
- Data management in private hospitals visit www.pmha.com.au

How do we measure change in mental health?



HOW DO WE MEASURE CHANGE IN MENTAL HEALTH?

When you see a mental health professional, they may ask you to fill out a form with some standard questions. These questions are called 'outcome measures'. This leaflet will answer some questions you may have, and help you to understand why they are used. There are lots of different measures and this leaflet talks about just a few commonly used ones.

What do outcome measures do?

Outcome measures are used to see if how you feel changes over time. The measures applied over time tell part of the story of your mental health care.



What are outcome measures?

An outcome measure is a list of questions that help doctors and other mental health professionals see how you are going.

Outcome measures are a little like a survey and ask you questions about how you have been feeling lately. It is really important to remember that outcome measures are not a 'test'; there are no right, or wrong, answers.

What does it mean to you?

Outcome measures help your mental health professional understand your condition. However, it not only helps them understand you better, but it also gives you a chance to ask questions and talk about things that are important to you.

What kinds of questions will I have to answer?

Outcome measures ask lots of different questions about how you are thinking, feeling and functioning. For example, have you had any difficulty at home or work? Do you have any problems with confusion, concentration or memory?

Is my information private?

Yes. Any information that you give your health professional is confidential, just like all of your other medical record information.

Types of outcome measures

Measures fall into two categories: those that you complete; and those completed by your mental health professional. There are also measures specific to older people, children and adolescents. Often, different states require different measures to be used.

Measures that you complete **may** include:

- *Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)*
This tells your mental health professional about your general level of distress.
- *Behaviour & Symptom Identification Scale (BASIS32)*
This tells your mental health professional about any things that you have difficulty with (eg. addictive behaviour, depression).
- *Mental Health Inventory (MHI)*
This measure tells your mental health professional about some of the negatives as well as the positives in your life.
- *Mental Health Questionnaire 14 (MHQ-14)*
This tells your mental health professional about your emotional state and if that has had an impact on your social and work related activities.

Measures that your mental health professional complete **may** include:

- *Health of the Nation Outcome Scales (HoNOS)*
This is a summary of your issues from your doctor or other mental health professionals' perspective. It details things like the impact of your symptoms and how well you have managed day to day activities. The HoNOS may help in the development of a care plan for you.
- *Life Skills Profile (LSP)*
This measure shows how well you can function in the community. It looks at things like self-care and social contact

What happens to my information?

When you answer outcome measure questions, the information will be put in your medical record. That way your mental health professional can use it to help with planning your care. It also helps assess how your condition changes over time.

Does anyone else use my information?

Your information will be combined with others to give the clinic or hospital unit an idea about how they are performing. Clinics and hospital units often compare how they are going with other hospitals. This way, they know what they are doing well and not so well. Before this is done, your information is de-identified. This means no one can tell what information is yours.

Then the hospital or clinic can make changes to improve their services.

