

S17-01

ASSESSING FUNCTIONALITY IN SCHIZOPHRENIA: THE PSYCHOSOCIAL REMISSION IN SCHIZOPHRENIA SCALE (PSRS)

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Background: Remission, both symptomatic and psychosocial, is now an achievable goal in a substantial proportion of schizophrenia patients.

Objective: to develop a brief, clinician rated scale for the assessment of psychosocial remission in schizophrenia (the PSRS). The scale is to match the quantification of symptomatic remission as delineated by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) task force.

Method: a "bank" of 124 questions pertaining to psychosocial remission was derived from published scales reflecting two domains: quality of life (QoL) and activities of daily living (ADL). Psychiatrists, residents, psychiatric nurses and community nurses were presented with the questions. All were asked to choose the 8 items they considered as reflecting the essence of psychosocial remission. Inter-rater reliability of the final scale version was assessed amongst psychiatrists.

Results: the questions' "bank" was reviewed by 429 mental health professionals. The four items found to be most frequently sanctioned in the QoL domain were: a. familial relations (endorsed by 78% of participants), b. understanding and self-awareness (46%), c. energy (58%) and d. interest in every-day life (38%). The four items sanctioned in the I-ADL domain were: a. self-care (86%), b. activism (65%), c. responsibility for medications (54%) and d. use of community services (32%). Inter-rater reliability amongst 70 psychiatrists ranged from 0.67 to 0.83.

Conclusion: the PSRS is an 8-item scale quantifying psychosocial remission in schizophrenia in a manner that complements symptomatic assessment of remission. The PSRS may be useful for both research and clinical evaluation.