Tip Sheet 5 – The IQCODE (Short Form)

What is the IQCODE: Informant Questionnaire on Cognitive Decline in the Elderly (IQCODE) is a tool used to assess cognitive impairment in older people.

The tool requires an informant to rate cognitive change over time on a 5 point likert scale.

The IQCODE was developed by Jorm and Jacomb in 1989 and consisted of 26 questions; in 1994 a 16 item short version of the IQCODE was developed by Professor Anthony Jorm.

Information in this tip sheet will focus on the short version on this tool as it is quicker to administer, and therefore more practical to use during an ACAS assessment; it has also been recommended by the 2010 Expert Clinical Reference Group (ECRG) (Sansoni et al., 2010) at a national level.

The IQCODE should be used to supplement the other patient administered tools (e.g. the SMMSE; to increase sensitivity and specificity (Flicker et al, 1997; Flicker, 2010), or used in situations where the patient is unable to complete the assessment.

Benefits of the IQCODE: The IQCODE takes approximately 10-15 minutes to administer and is filled out by an informant. It can be used for people with lower levels of education and for those who are illiterate.

Cut-off score: The cut-off scores are based on the total score divided by the number of questions (average item score range 1-5). Higher scores indicate greater impairment. A score below 3.00 indicates improvement, 3.00 indicates no change, 3.01 – 3.50 indicates slight decline; 3.51- 4.00 indicates moderate decline; and 4.01 – 5.00 indicate severe decline.

Translated Tools

Translated versions of the IQCODE (both short and long forms) can be found at the website listed below (please note that the tools on this site may not have been validated):

http://ageing.anu.edu.au/Iqcode/

In addition to these tools the following versions of the tool are also available:

Chinese: Fuh et al (1995) and Lim et al (2003) 26-item version with the cut-off score of 3.4 (tools can be requested from the authors).

Further Resources and References

The web page listed below provides copies of the tool in short and long form in various languages (including English) and information on how to score the tool:
http://ageing.anu.edu.au/Iqcode/

The Assessment of Older People with dementia and depression of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds: A review of current practice and the development of guidelines for Victorian Aged Care Assessment Services (funded by the Victorian Department of Health; undertaken by the National Ageing Research Institute, 2011)

References

- **Tool Reference:** Jorm, A. F. (1994). A short form of the Informant Questionnaire on Cognitive Decline in the Elderly (IQCODE): Development and cross-validation. *Psychological Medicine, 24*, 145-153.

- **Original (Long) Tool reference:** Jorm, A. F. & Jacomb, P. A. (1989). The Informant Questionnaire on Cognitive Decline in the Elderly (IQCODE): socio-demographic correlates, reliability, validity and some norms. *Psychological Medicine,* 19, 1015–1022.

- Flicker, L., LoGiudice, D., Carlin, J. B., & Ames, D. (1997). The predictive value of dementia screening instruments in clinical populations. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 12, 203-209.

- Flicker, L. (2010). Screening and assessment instruments for the detection and measurement of cognitive impairment. In D. Ames, A. Burns, & J. O'Brien (Eds.). *Dementia* (4th ed, pp. 55-60). London; Hodder Arnold.

- Fuh, J. L., Teng, E. L., Lin, K.N., Larson, E. B., Wang, S. J., Liu, C. Y., Chou, P., Kuo, B. I. T., Liu, H. C. (1995). The Informant Questionnaire on Cognitive Decline in the Elderly (IQCODE) as a screening tool for dementia for a predominantly illiterate Chinese population. *Neurology, 45*, 92-96.

- Lim, H. J., Lim, J. P. P., Anthony, P., Yeo, D. H. H., & Sahadevan, S. (2003). Prevalence of cognitive impairment amongst Singapore's elderly Chinese: A community-based study using the ECAQ and IQCODE. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 18*, 142-148

- Sansoni, J., Marosszeky, N., Fleming, G., & Sansori, E. (2010). *Selecting Tools for ACAT Assessment: A Report for the Aged Care Assessment Program (ACAP) Expert Clinical Reference Group*. Centre for Health Service Development, University of Wollongong. Report for the Aged Care Assessment Program, Department of Health and Ageing. Canberra.