



Screening

Frequently Asked Questions

■ ***Can I administer a screening instrument over the phone?***

While it is better to administer a screening instrument in person, it can be done over the phone.

■ ***Can I use only parts of a screening instrument?***

It is recommended that any screening instrument be used in its entirety, to take maximum advantage of its established psychometric properties and cut-off scores.

■ ***Can I add items?***

It is possible to add items to the screening protocol, but not to the screening instrument per se. While you might want to add some particular items, you also want to ensure that you maintain the integrity of the standard instrument (i.e., do not delete items; use the standard scoring system and cut-off scores for that instrument). Also, be careful not to add so many items that the instrument becomes unwieldy and more extensive than what is needed for a screener.

■ ***Is it necessary to add a screener if you are already completing a full assessment on everyone who enters?***

Using a screener has several advantages:

- (1.) use of a screener can conserve resources because, although co-occurring disorders is quite prevalent, it is not present in all referrals;
- (2.) use of a screener permits data to be gathered concerning the prevalence of co-occurring disorders and trends, which could be helpful in reporting and in planning resource allocation;
- (3.) use of a screener is often clinically beneficial in establishing a first contact between the client and the clinic.

A useful alternative might be to administer the screener over the phone or as the first part of the full assessment.