Substance Dependence Severity Scale (SDSS)

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

The SDSS is a semi-structured, clinician-administered interview that assesses DSM-IV dependence and abuse and ICD-10 harmful use for alcohol and other drugs for the previous 30 days. It assesses frequency and severity of symptoms.

**TARGET POPULATION**

- Adults
- Adolescents (over 16 years)

**Groups for which this instrument might be especially helpful?**

This instrument was designed to be sensitive to change after a given point in time. Given that it is keyed to the DSM-IV and ICD-10 criteria, it may be able to detect the effects of alcohol and substance abuse treatment more readily than other instruments.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

Number of items: 7–10 screening questions for alcohol and each drug category; 13 symptom items

Number of subscales: 3

Format(s): ☒ Pencil-and-paper
- ☒ Interview
- ☐ Observation
- ☐ Computer self-administered
- ☐ Other

Time required for administration: 30 to 45 minutes

Administered by: Clinician

Training required for administration? ☒ yes ☐ no

**SCORING**

Time required to score/interpret: Minimal

Scored by: Hand, computer

Scoring key? ☒ yes ☐ no

Computerized scoring or interpretation available? ☒ yes ☐ no

Norms available? ☐ yes ☒ no

Instrument normed on subgroups? ☐ yes ☒ no
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PSYCHOMETRICS

Have reliability studies been done? □ yes □ no
What measure(s) of reliability was used?
□ Test-retest
□ Split half
□ Internal consistency

Have validity studies been done? □ yes □ no
What measures of validity have been derived?
□ Content
□ Criterion (predictive, concurrent, “postdictive”)
□ Construct

CLINICAL UTILITY OF INSTRUMENT

Designed to provide an indication of recent severity of substance abuse and dependence on alcohol and specifically by drug type. Offers unique advantages as a measure of treatment outcome that may be more sensitive to changes in clinical status than outcome measures routinely used, such as self-report substance use, urinalysis results, or diagnostic status.

RESEARCH APPLICABILITY

The SDSS can be used as a baseline and followup measure in alcoholism and drug abuse treatment studies and other studies requiring quantification of severity keyed specifically to DSM-IV or ICD-10 criteria.

SOURCE, COST AND COPYRIGHT ISSUES

Copyright: □ yes □ no
Cost: No cost to use. Training costs depend on size of group and circumstances.
Source: Deborah Hasin, Ph.D.
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(212) 523-7722

SOURCE REFERENCE


SUPPORTING REFERENCES
