

ASI COMPETENCY MEASURES

What are competency measures?

Competency measures are methods or procedures used to determine how proficient individuals are in the proper use of various tools, protocols, and the like. Competency measures are widely used in business, industrial, and academic settings.

We currently use a number of competency measures to determine various dimensions of performance. Some strictly measure content knowledge of the ASI instrument, some measure the ability to properly code an ASI, while others measure the ability to properly conduct an ASI interview.

ASI Coding Quiz (measures content knowledge and coding ability)

A comprehensive quiz based on the original ASI coding Quiz developed in 1993 at the Center for Studies of Addiction, University of Pennsylvania) is used to measure item content knowledge, coding and rating ability, and the clinical significance of information collected using the ASI, as one step in an overall program of quality assurance monitoring. (Please refer to the article "Training for and Maintaining Interviewer Consistency with the ASI", Fureman, I., McLellan, A.T., and Alterman, A., Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 1994.)

Severity Rating Vignettes (measures individual ability against established standards)

Severity Rating Vignettes are two-page client synopses which provide key information about a hypothetical client, covering each section of the ASI. Vignettes began to be incorporated in standard ASI training events in 1994. Trainees read a vignette then apply a step-by-step approach to determine individual severity ratings. Trainees then compare their own severity ratings to the trainer's "standard" set of severity ratings using the hypothetical client data. While these vignettes are used primarily as a training vehicle, the use of a standardized approach to develop severity ratings assists in the development of interviewer competency and inter-rater reliability.

Manual Review of a Completed ASI (measures coding ability)

Newly-trained ASI interviewers are asked to conduct a "practice" ASI interview with an actual client/client and submit the coded ASI for item-by-item review by a skilled ASI checker. Individual feedback is provided to the interviewer, with recommendations for improvement. This activity measures the ability to properly complete, cross-check, and code an ASI, but it does not measure interviewing skills.

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Videotape Coding Exercise (measures coding ability)

These exercises use videotaped ASI interviews in which a skilled interviewer interviews a "client" (role-played by another staff person). While watching the videotaped ASI interview, the viewer uses a blank ASI instrument to code all sections of the ASI. The viewer's coded ASI is then compared to the properly coded ASI that corresponds to the videotaped interview. The videotaped interview lasts just over an hour. A more qualitative review of the coded ASI with individual feedback is also available for purchase.

Individualized Q.A. Audit of Interviewer Skills (measures content knowledge, coding ability and interviewing skills)

An individualized Q.A. audit consists of a simulated interview designed to measure the proper use of the ASI. It is usually conducted on the telephone. A staff member role-plays a client, using a scripted text, and a recording sheet designed to capture impressions on interviewing style, adherence to confidentiality regulations, definitions of terms, and the like. At the completion of the simulated interview, the staff person compares the interviewer's coded responses to the standardized coded ASI, and provides verbal feedback. The audit process lasts approximately 90 minutes and yields rich, qualitative and quantitative information that the ASI interviewer can utilize to improve proficiency.

Supervisor Training Program (formerly known as ASI Checkers Training Program, designed to maintain integrity of data collected)

The same qualities that produce ASI interviewers are essential for supervisors. ASI interviewer's supervisors and managers must be familiar with the relationships between individual items within and across sections of the ASI instrument, correct coding and rating, and the clinical significance of the sections, and items within them. Many of these relationships become apparent only through extensive use of the ASI. The ASI Supervisor Training Program will enable supervisors and managers to; 1.) Maintain the integrity of the clinical information collected, 2.) Support the transfer and maintenance of knowledge and skills acquired in workshops back to the workplace, and 3.) Insure the correct utilization of clinical data collected for making diagnosis or diagnostic impressions, patient placement decisions, assessing criminogenic risk, and treatment planning.

The supervisor training incorporates the full range of competency measures described above.

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